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LAFAYETTE

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE VACANT CHAIR.

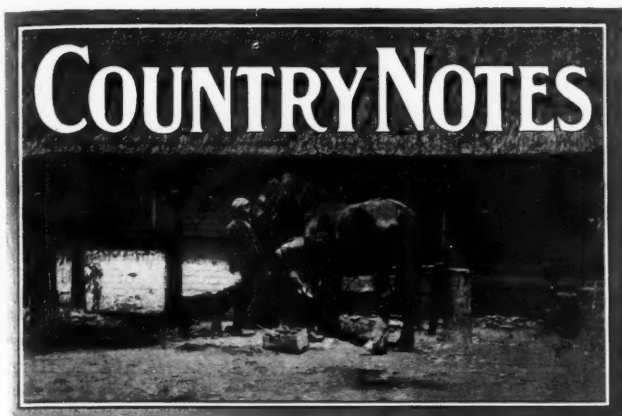
IT is impossible that the regret felt at Mr. Hanbury's death could have been deeper or more general. Liberals have been as ready as Conservatives to acknowledge that he was pre-eminently the right man in the right place; and this is no mere post-mortem sentiment, as his energy had full acknowledgment while he was still alive. All this makes it the more important that whoever is appointed to succeed him should be as near as possible equally fit for the post. A reproach has frequently been brought against the present Government that those who are at the head of it are not entirely guiltless of nepotism. We have not paid much attention to it so long as the nephews concerned were able and fit men for the work they had to do. For instance, Mr. Balfour's relationship to Lord Salisbury did not unfit him in any way to be the most able Chief Secretary for Ireland, which, if we remember rightly, was the first difficult post he held under the Premiership of his distinguished uncle. But, on the other hand, there have been, it is useless to deny, many appointments that can only be described as those of wholesome mediocrities. It would be a cause for very great regret if Mr. Balfour fell into any mistake of this kind in connection with the vacancy at the Board of Agriculture. There is no department in which capacity and energy are more needed than in this particular one. Mr. Hanbury had only begun the work there, or, rather, had begun to undo the work of some of his predecessors. For this particular seat in the Cabinet has been oftener than any other occupied, not because of the fitness of the holder, but merely to provide a place for some third or fourth rate politician who was not considered able enough for any more responsible post. Looking back over the last six or eight Ministries, it is difficult to recall a single case of the Minister of Agriculture being in the front rank. The reasons why this should not be allowed to continue are too strong and clear to need repetition. When Mr. Hanbury was appointed Minister of Agriculture it was pointed out that in one respect he was fortunate. The department was, and is, one that affords opportunities of gaining distinction possessed

by no other branch of the Government. Our greatest industry is just in that position when a wise head and a guiding hand may lead it on to unexampled prosperity. For a quarter of a century at least it has suffered a depression beyond that of any other industry, and during that time the condition of England in other ways has been steadily and rapidly improving. The growth of the income-tax returns, after all due deduction has been made for greater strictness in collection, shows beyond dispute that the wealth of the middle and upper classes has greatly increased, while the labouring classes at no time in history have been so well off; the average cottage of to-day is more comfortable than the homes of well-to-do tradesmen were in the middle of the last century. The bearing of this upon agriculture is obvious. The inalienable advantage possessed by the British farmer is that while foreign tillers of the soil have to send their produce long journeys oversea, he has his market at the door. If we think of the millions of customers all waiting to be fed, it seems absurd that every foot of land in Great Britain should not be cultivated at a profit, or that anyone engaged in husbandry should be at a loss to make a living. Nevertheless, it is a notorious fact that the producer and the consumer have not, in this case, been brought together in the manner that is desirable, and the great work lying before the new Minister of Agriculture is to effect this union. This fact should be kept in mind, because it at once shows why Mr. Hanbury did so well and serves as a guide to the choice of a successor. In other words, the qualification most essential in a Minister of Agriculture at the present time is not so much that he should be skilled in the art of husbandry as that he should have an organising and business head. It was Mr. Hanbury's distinction that he possessed the quality thus indicated to an extraordinary degree, and up to the moment of his death he was full of ideas that had been suggested by experience in commerce. It would be very easy to go into detail and enumerate a few of the problems that the new Minister of Agriculture will have to deal with. There is first the difficulty of the village and the town. The depopulation of the rural districts, concerning which so much was said a few years ago, still continues at as great a pace as ever, and the Minister able to check this distressing movement would earn the gratitude of generations to come. For nothing that we know of could maintain the physique of the town workers if the stream of fresh blood flowing from the rural districts were, so to speak, to be dried up at its source. Obviously this is business rather than agriculture, and even in the legislation required to make life more livable for the country poor the same thing is necessary. It has been the defect of nearly every measure brought in for the purpose of enabling labouring men to improve their position, either by acquiring land or houses, that it was not drawn up on good business lines. The incentives to the hire-and-purchase scheme have not been sufficient to attract those for whom they were devised, nor have they been so attractive as those employed for the same purpose in foreign countries. This is a matter that requires thorough going into, and it must be done by a Minister who at once has boldness enough to grapple with it, and the commercial sagacity that will enable him to know what provisions will be effective and what will not.

Co-operation is another movement that requires the guidance of a commercial intellect, one that can discriminate between the circumstances under which combination will be advisable and where it will not. Here a faddist or an extremist could do incalculable mischief, because the course of events during the last few years has demonstrated that a great deal of the co-operation that used to be called for would be inadvisable; yet it is equally certain that co-operation acting in the right place could be made a powerful factor in the rehabilitation of agriculture as a profitable pursuit. Again, the organisation of all our smaller industries, such as gardening, poultry-keeping, fruit-growing, and dairy work, is really a matter of business detail, and we want a man at the head of affairs who, having a thorough grip of the principles, will always know when to encourage progress along the right lines. It is scarcely our business to select one from the many names that have been mentioned in connection with the office, but were we to choose, Mr. Jeffreys would be our selection. He knows both business and agriculture, and, besides, is a man of singular independence as well as ability. No better nomination could be made.

Our Portrait Illustrations.

THE frontispiece for this week is a portrait of Lady Cecil Victoria Constance Scott Montagu, the eldest daughter of the ninth Marquess of Lothian, and wife of the Hon. John Scott Montagu, of Beaulieu, Hants. On page 612 will be found a picture of the Duchess of Westminster and her only daughter, Lady Ursula Grosvenor. Her Grace is the daughter of Colonel William Cornwallis-West.



AFTER his long and, we trust, agreeable tour, the King was welcomed back with great joy on Tuesday. His journey has not been quite free from anxiety, as witness the alarming canard put abroad about him on Sunday night. That it proved to be without foundation was gratifying, but it is a pity that the originators of such rumours could not be got hold of. His Majesty's reception in France was exceptionally hearty, and it was curious to notice that in the French quarter of London, on Sunday night, the streets were gay with bunting, or as gay as they could be in a downpour of rain, while congratulatory legends in large letters were stretched across the thoroughfare. It was a pleasant sign that the King is really entitled to the American description of him as "The Great Ambassador."

The debate on Colonel Kinloch's case in the House of Lords turned upon a very interesting principle. It was the contention set up by the Duke of Bedford and those who supported him that the officer should not have been put upon half-pay without an official trial and the opportunity of calling witnesses. Lord Roberts and Lord Goschen, on the other hand, laid it down, in the interests of discipline, that if an unsatisfactory state of things was found to prevail in a regiment, that fact was in itself a condemnation of the commanding officer. Clearly this is right. The air was cleared in another direction by the explicit statement of Lord Roberts that, before arriving at a decision, he had carefully considered the whole case, interviewed Colonel Kinloch himself, and was, directly or indirectly, uninfluenced by the advice of any outsider, man or woman. Now that all has been said that need be said, it is to be hoped that no more will be heard of the case, and that the reform of the Army will be taken in hand silently and thoroughly.

Lord Kelvin has written a letter to the *Times* that has caused much talk among thoughtful people. It is on the well-worn subject of Science and Religion. But with a difference. Hitherto our Huxleys and Darwins have tended to play havoc with the supernatural, and the listlessness with which questions of religion have come to be regarded in Great Britain is plausibly traced to the dissemination of evolutionary ideas. But then, that was looking at the matter from only one side. Science in her march comes at last to something which her footrule cannot measure nor her scales weigh. The will-power of man, says Lord Kelvin, "is a miracle of physical and chemical and elemental science." So, therefore, he arrives at the conclusion that "Science is not antagonistic to religion, but a help for religion." No doubt we shall, during the next few weeks, hear much of this weighty deliverance.

This is the summer term at Oxford, but in the case of cricket, to some extent, the summer term in name only. At any rate, the new cricket ground belonging to Brasenose, and opposite the barges, is a standing lake, showing beautiful reflections of the adjacent houses, but distinctly disheartening to the cricketer. On the other hand, the river, filled to the brim with rushing and tawny water, fringed with the college barges and trees in the glory of fresh verdure, is a noble sight. So are the stalwart young Englishmen, already in training, who are preparing for the Eights. A casual glance at the leading crews shows that some of them contain first-rate material. "Univ." and New College, first and second on the river, are hardly likely to suffer or gain any change of place. Of the remaining crews that are anywhere near the top, Worcester and Pembroke are likely to go down, and Exeter and Brasenose, both very powerful crews, to go up.

A correspondent writes: "Fortunate chance took me to Hindhead on Saturday last, when the champions of a score or so of civilian rifle clubs belonging to Surrey, Sussex, and

Hampshire contended for the custody of a handsome challenge trophy presented by Mr. Langman, of hospital fame during the war. The scene of action was the miniature range inaugurated by Sir A. Conan Doyle in the immediate vicinity of his house, Undershaw, the targets being placed on the ground of Mrs. Tyndall, the wife of the late Professor. The spectacle was certainly one calculated to exhilarate any patriotic Englishman. All the teams shot remarkably well in the face of distinctly difficult conditions, and the London and South Western score of 164 out of a possible 200 was a good deal more than creditable. But the main value of the little meeting was that it was the outward and visible sign of the substantial progress of a really valuable movement. Twenty-five thousand men now belong to clubs affiliated to the N.R.A., and 25,000 more are members of unaffiliated clubs. They can all handle a rifle to some purpose, although three years ago most of them were totally ignorant of rifle-shooting. None of them are Volunteers. It follows that they are men who either would not or could not be Volunteers before. Surely it cannot be denied that these men would be a valuable military asset in the case of invasion."

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, big-bodied and large-hearted man that he is, has one pet project which he has suggested more than once to the authorities at Aldershot. It is that a force of Regulars should be told off to attack Hindhead on a given day, and that he, with but short notice, should be allowed to send round the fiery cross, so to speak, and to summon the rifle clubs to oppose them. That really would be valuable practice on a small scale, and not dissimilar to the Boer War. The Regulars would be working under novel conditions, and in a country of which the intimate details were not familiar to them. They would be opposed by undrilled men, good shots all of them, to whom every little undulation and ravine was absolutely well known. But it is to be feared the project is not likely to be realised, valuable as the lesson would be, for the Regulars would be laughed at without mercy if they were ambushed by the civilians; and the odds are that they would be caught in that way.

OVER THE MOOR TO TAVISTOCK.

It's May in the West of England now,
And the tasselled larch is green
With a living green against the show
Of the dark firs set between;
And the gorse bush burns, a flaming thing
Above the boulders grey,
And you hear the lark's song shivering
All down the skies of May.
And it's nothing but sand, sand, sand,
In this weary and foreign land,
And oh! to be walking by wood and rock
Over the moor to Tavistock!

It's May in the land of stream and tor
And my girl looking out,
Shading her eyes, at the farmstead door,
From her bright hair blown about;
Watching the old man climb the hill,
While the mother stands behind
With a face that the peace of God keeps still,
And the love of God makes kind.
And here in the changeless sand
Of this dreary foreign land
I dream I'm walking by wood and rock
Over the moor to Tavistock!

DOROTHY FRANCES GURNEY.

In an article contributed to one of the monthly magazines by the Rev. John Vaughan, it is pointed out that the raven, which used to be common in nearly every English village, as can be seen from the fact that almost every place had its raven tree, has been so reduced in numbers that it has now only one or two nesting-sites in England. Freshwater is one of them. Ravens have bred for centuries on the high cliffs there, and a pair are to be seen all the year round. The sea-fowl leave the cliff at certain seasons, but the ravens stay there all the time. Mr. Vaughan's account is extremely interesting, but he rather exaggerates the extent to which the raven has disappeared. There are several places in the North of England, and in the Highlands of Scotland, carefully preserved for shooting purposes, where the raven is spared, and is an object of pride to the owner. It would not be wise to particularise, as it would only give a clue to those collectors who are ever on the search for rare birds, but the writer would have no difficulty whatever in going to several ravens' nests at the present moment.

In the Scottish newspapers a discussion has been going on recently about the pronunciation of the word "golf." To the ordinary Saxon intelligence the word would not seem to present any difficulty whatever, but from the mists of discussion three forms of pronunciation emerge. One is what may be called the natural one, with due value given to the "l"; the second seems to be favoured by the pundits, and it is arrived at by omitting the "l" and saying "goff," but then the difficulty arises that if

you say "goffer" you do not mean "golfer," but a person who is engaged in a fluting or crimping process known as "goffering"; thirdly romps in the buirdly Scot with his style, which is made by changing the "l" into a "w" and saying "gowf." This was how they used to spell it in the old days, when an Act of Parliament had to be made to keep the people of Scotland from dissipating their time over what they fondly imagine to be their national game. But it was really imported from Blackheath in London, and at Blackheath they say "golf," which appears to settle the question.

From the enquiries which we have caused to be made in different parts of the country, it would seem that the frost has done very little injury to the farm, and very much to the garden and orchard. Arable crops are scarcely affected by it, and look as promising as they have done for a great number of years—such of them, that is to say, as are above ground; but the greater number of the seed-fields present an appearance merely of having been ploughed and harrowed. Berries and apples and plums and cherries, however, seem to be well-nigh ruined, and something like a check has been administered to the business of fruit-growing. Those engaged in it say with truth that a bumper season is of very little advantage to them, as the small price obtained, combined with the unreasonable freights charged by the railway companies, combine to destroy what little profit there might otherwise be.

The paper which Mr. Rew read before the Society of British Farmers was more interesting than the majority of such deliverances. It dealt with the curious diminution in the number of cattle in Great Britain during the last few years, and Mr. Rew is entitled to the merit of having worked out an entirely satisfactory explanation. There were two factors to be taken account of, one being scarcity of feed during the long series of dry years, and the other the high price of meat. The result was to induce farmers to send as much of their stock to market as was possible, and Mr. Rew has proved by the actual market returns that the quantity of livestock sold was very much above the average. This explanation completely cuts the ground from under the feet of those who asserted that the diminution in the number of livestock as shown by Major Craigie's returns is a symptom of continued depression. On the contrary, it means that the owners have been making rather more money than usual, and Mr. Rew is perfectly right in pointing out that it is a sign of prosperity rather than of gloom.

A letter from Mr. Charles Hiedsieck to the *Times* of April 30th gives a most pessimistic report of the vines that have suffered severely from the Eastertide cold. The worst damage seems to have been done in the "south, centre, and west district (Saumur, Nantes, and Bordeaux)," while the Champagne districts have suffered less, owing to their being less advanced, and the same applies to the districts of Ay and Montagne de Reims. On the other hand, the white grape country of Cramant, Avize, etc., has been badly hit, because of the forwardness of the vines there. The letter, however, which begins in this gloomy manner, concludes with introducing a ray of the brightest hope, for the writer states that the famous vintage year of 1892 was remarkable for a severe frost following on a fall of snow in the week after Easter. If the like causes produce the like results this year we need not grumble.

It was pretty generally known that the members of the Stock Exchange were a sporting and athletic people, but few could have expected them to perform such a fine feat in pedestrianism as was seen in the now famous walk to Brighton. Not only is it most creditable that the winner should have done the distance in nine and a-half hours, but the number of those who got through in good time speaks volumes for the healthy habits of those engaged in the Stock Exchange. The event is likely to set many other institutions, such as banks and large offices, having similar competitions, and that is a result to be desired. No healthier recreation than walking could be suggested for the clerks and others who are compelled to spend the greater part of their time indoors.

Mr. Rider Haggard's discourse to the Charity Organisation people the other night did not sound very promising to those who nourish the idea of repopulating the country by means of the waifs and strays from town. The town failure, it is as well to recognise, is thoroughly unsuitable to country life, and never, or scarcely ever, is able to adapt himself to it. He does not relish the hard labour and the walking, and after the liveliness of the streets the country lane appears to him incredibly dull and stupid. But if the case be hopeless in regard to the sturdy beggar, it should not be so in respect to the youth under fifteen.

Mr. Haggard suggests that boys should be taken to the country and boarded, but a very strong objection to this is that the town oaf is up to all manner of wickedness, and a fortnight of him in a village has been known to ruin the morals of all the young people in it.

The Scottish people are generally considered hard-headed, but that does not seem to prevent them going insane. The General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy, in the annual report which has just been issued, gives a very alarming account of the increase of lunacy in the northern parts of these islands. Since 1858 the number of lunatics under the jurisdiction of the Board has increased to 186 per cent., while the increase of the population has only been 50 per cent. The reporter of the Commission goes at great detail into figures that illustrate the nature of the classes affected. It is very curious to notice that certain districts appear more favourable to insanity than others. Those in Scotland in which mental defect is most prevalent are Argyle, Sutherland, Ross, Nairn, Caithness, Inverness, Orkney and Shetland. Another statement that will strike many people as singular is that where life is most free from worry, strain, and excitement, mental defect is most prevalent, while, on the other hand, where drink, vicious living, worry, and stress are all at their highest, the prevalence of mental defect falls to its lowest. This certainly does not supply teetotallers with a new argument. The Commissioners also say that the inter-marriage of pre-disposed persons is not responsible as far as can be seen from the figures. It is not suggested by the Commissioners that the prevalence of insanity is partly the effect of a limited choice in marriage.

THE HERALD OF SUMMER.

The lark may be too soon a comer,
The bird be too soon on the tree,
But, my Heart, you may say it is summer
When you hear the first hum of the bee!

The South wind that ripples the clover,
And rocks the green world at his feet,
Blows soft for this little brown rover
A-swing on his perilous seat.

The West wind that baffles the swallows,
And lashes the poplars to foam,
Stills the storm of his anger, and follows
To waft this wing-wanderer home.

The sunbeams of morning come strewing
Gold love on his russet and gold;
The blossom-cups yield at his wooing
Their hearts and the honey they hold.

There is many an earlier comer,
But no one loved better than he;
And, my Heart, it is never a summer
Till you hear the first hum of the bee!

WILL H. OGILVIE.

From time to time we are thrilled with a reminiscence of deeds of athletic prowess, by the obituary notice of one or other of those by whom they were performed paying, in his turn, the debt of Nature. But it was by no means in his due turn—on the contrary, altogether prematurely—that Major Butler, so far better known to a generation of past cricketers as "Sam Butler," died when he had but just passed the half century. His great claim to fame, of course, besides his general renown as a bowler, rested on the unique feat of taking every one of the Cambridge wickets in one innings of the 'Varsity match, all but two of them being clean bowled.

The experience of Colonel de Robeck, Master of the Kildare Foxhounds, shows that owners should not be in too great a hurry to destroy horses which have met with accidents without first finding out what really is wrong. At the Punchestown Meeting, lately, Colonel de Robeck ran a very excellent hunter of his—Young Faust—in the National Hunt Cup, but, coming down at a fence, he was supposed to have broken his leg, and a man was at once sent off for a gun to shoot him, and put an end to his misery. In the meantime it was thought advisable to try to work the poor animal off the course, and into a gravel pit near at hand. While doing so the horse gave a stumble, and the fetlock, which was only out of place, slipped in again. Though reported as having been shot, Young Faust is doing well, and his gallant owner hopes that he may yet carry him in many a run with the "Killing Kildares."

The vicissitudes of a race-horse's life are often very strange, but last Punchestown Meeting furnished a very peculiar case. On the second day, Mr. Tyson's Safe Conveyance, ridden by Mr. H. S. Persse, won the National Hunt Cup. This horse was purchased as a colt by Mr. Tyson at the sale of the late Major Bunbury's stud, but so little was thought of him that his owner gave him away to a Dublin publican, who used him for

drawing a "float," and he did his duty hauling about loads of from 25cwt. to 30cwt. Somehow, it was discovered that the horse had more in him than was thought, and he was taken out with hounds, and gave such a good account of himself that he was ultimately put in training, with the result that he captured the National Hunt Cup, beating a dozen of the best horses in Ireland. Only for the merest chance Safe Conveyance might still be hauling about a load of stout and beer barrels.

The formation of a Salmon and Trout Association, under powerful auspices, such as the presidency of the Duke of Abercorn, the attendance of the Duke of Bedford, of Lord Denbigh, and other notable people, is a sign that the sense of the nation is becoming convinced that "something must be done" if the fisheries of this United Kingdom are to survive. A Royal

Commission has been appointed; its report commended itself to the good opinion of all those whose opinion was best worth having; yet the Government, when asked what action they proposed to take in pursuance of its suggestions, have replied "none," for the moment, at least. At the recent dinner of the Fly-fishers' Club, when Lord Denbigh was in the chair, his health was happily proposed by Mr. Senior as that of the noble Earl who would descend to history as the genius who introduced rainbow trout into the Buckingham Palace water; at that same dinner, and in that very speech, Mr. Senior drew emphatic attention to the need of organising for the protection of fishing interests. Whether or no we are to regard the recent meeting at the Fishmongers' Hall as in part or in whole the result of Mr. Senior's energetic appeal, in any case we may welcome it as in the nature of an assurance that "something" really will be done, and that the doing will be in capable hands.

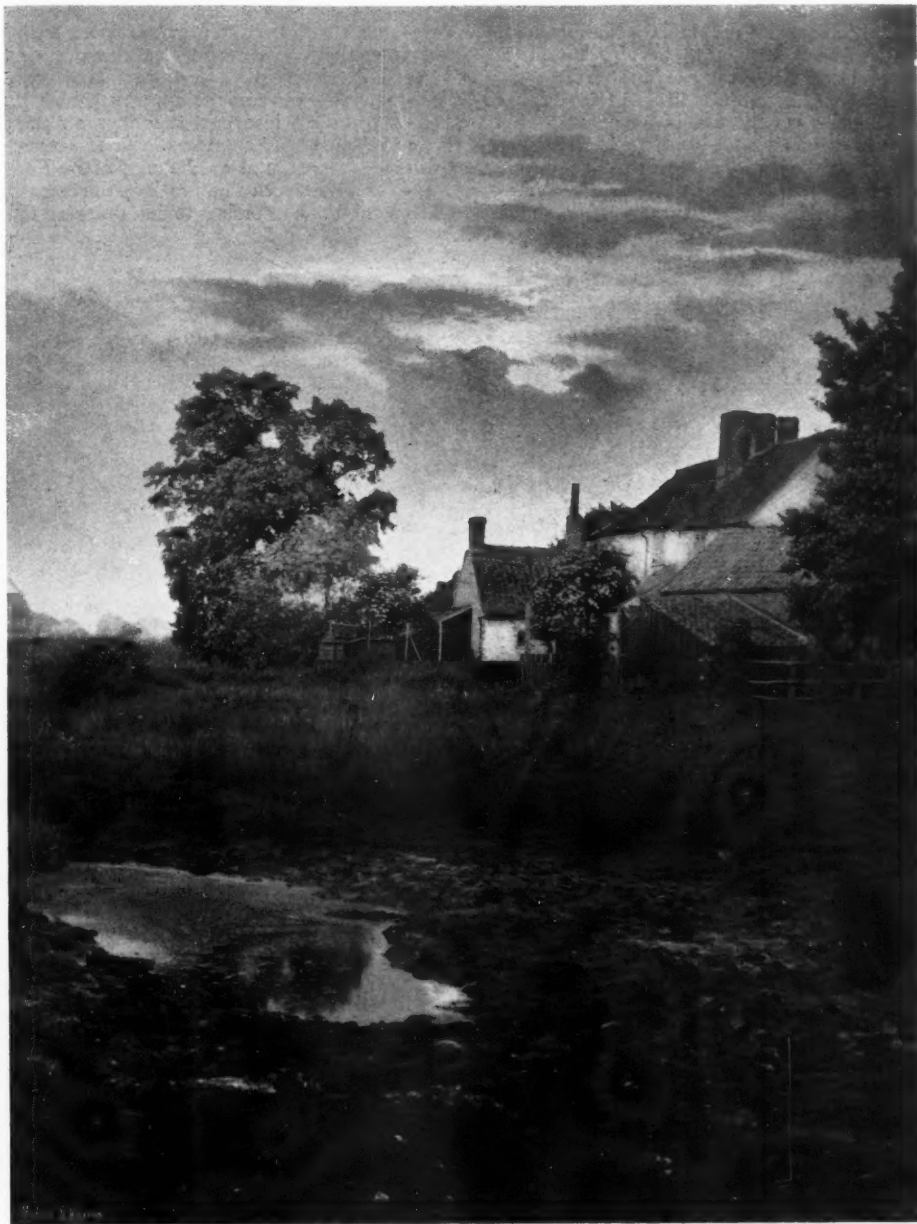
THE SKIRTS OF THE FOREST.

FEW even of those who most admire the beauties of Epping Forest are aware how exquisite are the bits of Essex in its immediate neighbourhood. Even the Lea appears somehow to have lost the reputation it had in the days of Father Izaak, yet it presents a river scenery that would be considered beautiful in any district of England. The stream itself, though sadly diminished in volume by the calls made on it by the water companies, is, nevertheless, clear and rapid. Stunted willows grow on its banks, and some at least of the land is Lammass Land, and has been maintained in pasture since the manorial system was at its height. There are curious old mills of one kind and another that also point to antiquity, and the woodland, which is never far out of sight, gives, as it were, a green frame to the picture. Many must regret that the attempts to stock it with fish have not proved very successful, although an angler may be seen here and there still plying his rod upon it in the appropriate season. Nearer its union with the Thames, that is to say in the neighbourhood of the marshes, where one of our photographs was taken, on Sunday afternoons there is a fisherman to almost every yard of the river bank, and the Forest pools on Bank Holidays prove an attraction to some thousands of anglers. Each comes armed with a long rod, usually of bamboo, and carries a useful box that serves the threefold purpose of a bait can, a lunch tin, and a garden seat. Perched on this box he

eats his sandwiches or smokes his pipe and watches the bobbing of his float for so many hours, and so often without catching anything, that the spectator cannot fail to admire his patience.

The farm-places round the Forest are of particular interest; many of them are old, though the style of building affected in the cottages and farmhouses is not one suggestive of the thought that those who made them intended them to last for hundreds of years. In fact, the evidence all goes to show that the poor of this part of the country used to be very poor indeed. To this day within fourteen or fifteen miles of London cottages may be seen, picturesque by reason of their age and decay, but more

utterly comfortable than almost any others that we know of in England. Some, too, point to the wild habits of their tenants of long ago. There was standing till lately a row of houses almost within the Forest of which each dwelling had a large pit just in front of the hearth and hidden by the hearthstone. The purpose of this is well known—it was to conceal the King's deer which had been stolen from the greenwood. There is still a tradition, whether founded upon any legal axiom or not we are unable to say, that a man cannot be prosecuted for stealing deer if he succeeds in getting the quarry within the four walls of his house without being observed; and in days not so far distant but that there are some living who remember them, many a fat stag was carried home and thrust into one of these pits, presently to be sold in the little town of



Walter Selfe.

AN ESSEX MARSH.

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Epping under the euphonious name of black sausages. There was a type of tradesman who looked upon it as the ideal of a country holiday to yoke a horse to a light cart, drive out to one of the ancient inns, and regale himself and his wife on black sausages. The virtuous generation that has grown up since appears able to resist temptations that proved too strong fifty years ago. Early in the spring and summer

mornings it is not unusual to see both the roedeer and the fallow-deer grazing on the sweet young corn that grows on the farms that skirt the forest. Indeed, the farmers must be praised for the long-suffering way in which they endure the various miseries caused by their neighbourhood to the woodland. The Forest itself is in the nature of a sanctuary where they shall neither kill nor destroy; accordingly the herds of deer have swollen in numbers. They can scarcely be supported within the Forest confines, and, being venturesome creatures, wander forth at night to feed themselves on the arable land. Rabbits, too, have multiplied to such an extent as to become almost a nuisance, and both by night and day they venture forth from their holes to batten on the farmers' crops. Even the preservation of foxes has its drawbacks, for the fox is not content with the pheasants and partridges and water-birds to be found in any quantity in the woods, on the plain, and on the waters, but he sallies out to visit the hen-roost and the duck-pond. The badgers which were established in Epping Forest about



Walter Selfe.

THE DAY'S WORK DONE.

Copyright

sixteen years ago have multiplied to such an extent that they have made new earths in the Forest itself, and have taken possession of burrows on the cultivated land. Some of the agricultural people think them extremely destructive, but we do not agree with them. A very strong prejudice prevails also against the harmless necessary hedgehog, which, with its piglings, may often be seen crossing the

drives in the dusk. Country people attribute almost every vice, known and unknown, to the hedgehog, saying that he milks the cows while they are sleeping, and delights in all sorts of eggs. But naturalists who are not interested parties will probably agree that he does not deserve this bad character. Occasionally, too, one hears the farmers grumbling about the small birds. The bullfinch has much increased in numbers during the last ten or twenty years, and we are afraid his destructiveness cannot be denied; but whatever the harm done by the small creatures of the Forest, there can be no doubt of the pleasure they give on the outskirts. The depth of the wood is almost the least populated because, except for the innumerable tits and gold-crests, which practically obtain their food from the insects that gather on the trees, there is no food for the other wild creatures. At this season the nightingale has already arrived, and on the edge of the Forest or in the clumps of rose and hawthorn that break up the open spaces, he is to be heard every night discoursing to his mistress that unforgettable song



Walter Selfe.

AN ESSEX FARM.

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of his, "most musical, most melancholy." Philomel seems to come in increasing numbers to Epping Forest every year now, and happily there is no saintly King Edward to banish him from its precincts with book and candle. Now, not only by night, but by day, the clamour of the nightingale is incessant, though sweetest by far it is to hear him when a full moon is shedding its light on grove and tree, with "the time and the place and the loved one together." It is said that each nightingale returns to its own spot every year, and the little creatures are not only the most ardent but the most jealous lovers, so that if one begins to sing the praises of his lady, the one in the neighbouring thicket takes his minstrelsy as a challenge, and pours forth a rival love song that he seems ever striving to make richer and more energetic than that of his opponent. It has often been argued whether the nightingale's song is one of joy or sadness, because the poets appear to have been almost equally divided on the subject, but we are afraid that the gaiety or the melancholy is to be found not in the bird's voice, but in the ear of the listener. What your own thoughts are ever seems to find echo from the voices of Nature. The little lover himself knows of nothing but the instantaneity of his own desire, and when engaged in his song heeds neither danger nor the presence of human beings, so that it is quite easy in the moonlight to watch his dark figure seated on the spray of some low bush while he pours forth his melody. The cuckoo, too, haunts Epping Forest in great numbers, and, like the nightingale, seems to become more amorous in the evening, so that it is not unusual to hear his clear call long after the sun is down. There is a bird more gorgeous in plumage than either of these that has increased very much in numbers during the past ten or fifteen years, namely, the yaffle, or green woodpecker. At this season he loves to get to the very topmost bough of a tree, and thence he gives forth the cry which at one time seems the most resounding and beautiful of the Forest voices, and at another comes upon the ear like the yell of a madman. There are places in the Forest where nearly every tree has three or four holes of the woodpecker in it, and it is easy to find the new ones by the heaps of chips at the tree-root, for his bill seems as effective as the chisel and adze of the carpenter. Happily he has no enemy, and on farm as well as wood land is for ever welcome.

Over nearly all the land adjacent to Epping Forest there are foot and bridlepaths with curious stiles and gates, where it is delightful for those to wander who do not love a certain melancholy that is inseparable from the Forest depths. Even on hot summer days there is a sense of being walled in, and a dimness that is all the greater where the foliage is thickest, so that one seems to breathe a purer air in the open fields. Those who have played golf on the new course, opened to take the place of the public golf links, will readily perceive that, far from exaggerating the beauty of the district, we have not done it anything like justice.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THIS year's Academy must be characterised as a singularly dull exhibition. Most of those artists, whether R.A.'s or outsiders, who can usually be relied on to give some relief to the dead level of mediocrity, either do not show at all, or send unimportant pictures which scarcely represent them at their best. Thus, though we have six portraits of Sargent's, none of them is as arresting as one expects this artist's work to be, and all are single figures. Mr. Watts sends only one picture, "A Parasite" (No. 153), which, though noble and dignified in sentiment and execution,

is not representative of our greatest imaginative artist, being merely a fine painting of a large ivy-grown tree. Mr. Abbey also shows only one picture (No. 209), and this not of the first importance in subject or size. It is, however, very beautiful. A group of girls are making pot-pourri in a white-walled room of rather curious and presumably modern architecture. The masses of pink and red roses, the wonderful pearly tones of the walls, and the turquoise green doors make a lovely and uncommon colour-harmony, while the technical beauty of the painting is indeed a joy. Sir L. Alma-Tadema shows one picture—a very small one—(No. 203), called "Silver Favourites." The marble is there as



Walter Selfe.

A ROUGH ROAD.

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usual, painted, of course, as only he can paint it; the figures, too, are, as usual, of an unattractive type, and the picture would be pleasanter without them. Mr. Swan is always a sparing exhibitor, but he generally has something good to show. This year he sends two pictures only, and no sculpture, and his more important painting (No. 64) cannot be called anything but a bad failure. The colour especially is most unpleasant. Among the remaining painters of the first rank, Mr. Waterhouse, Mr. C. W. Furse, and Mr. La Thangue are fairly represented. The first-named contributes three pictures (Nos. 16, 202, and 204), of which the "Echo and Narcissus" is the largest, and also in some respects the best. Certainly he has never painted a more lovely figure than "Echo." In these days when "strong" painters so often confound strength with ugliness, and less strong ones mistake prettiness for beauty, it is a matter of thankfulness to find an artist of real power possessing also a keen sense of beauty.

In portrait painting, Mr. Furse carries off the honours this year. His "Vice-Admiral Lord Charles Beresford" is a fine presentment of a good subject. There is a suggestion of the eighteenth century in the treatment of the background and accessories, without, however, the theatrical flavour which this style is apt to take, a flavour not entirely absent from the "Return from the Ride" (No. 471), fine picture though it is, and still more noticeable in the portrait of "Lieutenant-Colonel Sir J. J. White Jervis" (No. 145). Of Mr. La Thangue's four pictures, "At a Provençal Spring" (No. 528) is perhaps the most entirely satisfactory. His "Provençal Winter" (No. 133) shows an exaggeration of his curious technique, and the spottiness of the picture somewhat interferes with the enjoyment of its very real beauty. This odd way of painting, when carried to excess, makes a picture look as though it were covered with coloured wafers.

As the palm for portrait painting must this year be accorded to an "outsider," so must also that for pure landscape. Mr. Adrian Stokes will be given a first place by most critics for his "Autumn in the Mountains" (No. 276), a rarely beautiful representation of an extremely difficult subject. In this picture the freshness and individuality of the artist's point of view are as striking as the splendid accomplishment of the painting, and it is a matter for congratulation that it has been bought by the trustees of the Chantrey bequest. Mr. Wetherbee's "Music of Pipe and Brook" (No. 11) is



Walter Selfe. *SKIRTS OF THE FOREST: THE LEA VALLEY—EVENTIDE.* Copyright

lovely for its clear sky, against which the sheep show, not dark as most people would have painted them, but in luminous half-tones of wonderful subtlety. It is a pity that the figure in this picture is not on a level with the rest of the composition. Mr. Edward Stott's two beautiful landscapes, "The Gleaners" (No. 330) and "Echo" (No. 616) stand out with supreme distinction among their common-place and crude surroundings. It is a strange thing that this fine artist should be still in the ranks of the "outsiders"—passed over, while Mr. Bacon is selected as one of the men whom the Academy delights to honour. Among the remaining well-known artists from whom one expects good things, and who do not disappoint us, may be mentioned Mr. Clausen, Mr. Fritz Thaulow, Mr. Napier Hemy, Mr. Aumonier, Mr. John R. Reid, Mr. Mouat Loudan, Mr. Colin Hunter, and Mr. Lionel Smythe, the latter's two small water-colours being especially brilliant.

The following pictures, of which space does not permit more detailed notice, should not be overlooked, an easy thing to do among such vast fields of mediocre or positively bad work: "War" (No. 188), Arthur McCormick; "Jolly Lane Cot" (No. 337), Lindsay D. Symington; "Gossips" (No. 562), Flora Reid; "A Yorkshire River" (No. 642), Albert Bottomley; "Evensong" (No. 675), Claude Hayes; "Unto this Last" (No. 742), Spenlove-Spenlove; "A Pastoral" (No. 816), Thomas Hunt; "A Love Story" (No. 372), E. Phillips Fox; "The Quay" (No. 844), Lance Thackeray; "Edinburgh" (No. 884), Leonard Powell; "Titian's Canal" (No. 968), Graham Petrie.

This list does not pretend to have exhausted all the pictures that may be worth looking at, but it includes most of those that can be discovered without the aid of a telescope. Having so far only mentioned the good things, it would be unfair to omit some notice of the bad ones, though in their case the numbers make it a hopeless task to do more than indicate a few of the most striking. Those paintings which, though unsuccessful, are good in aim and intention, may be passed over in silence, but those others in which a deliberate attempt is made to capture the favour of an inartistic section of the public cannot be left entirely "unsung," though they may be "unwept" and "unhonoured." Into this class must be put a large majority of the subject pictures, most of which are obviously painted with a view to the coloured supplements of next Christmas. Many of them, though not all, are also incredibly bad from a technical point of view. Mr. Isaac Snowman has no less than three (Nos. 41, 241, and 387) of which it is difficult to say anything that is not libellous. Mr. Yeend King has two (Nos. 287 and 718) which are a mass of rustic sentimentality and sticky green paint. Mr. Eyre Crowe shows two (Nos. 310 and 448) for which in the matter of bad drawing and painting it would be difficult to find many equals, though plenty could be found as trivial and inartistic in subject and sentiment, such as, for instance, "The Lily Pond" (No. 196) of Mr. G. D. Leslie, and the "Rediviva" (No. 197) of Mr. E. J. Gregory. "Hunt the Slipper" (No. 780), by Mr. Fred Morgan, and "Golden Hours" (No. 391), by Mr. Arthur Elsley, may be classed together as frank playing to the gallery, but they are at any rate not so contemptible on the technical side as a picture called "Daffodils" (No. 224), which is given a place of importance on the line in Room IV. This black list could be extended indefinitely, but it will be enough to indicate Nos. 301, 355, 311, 361, 362, 422, and 668 as specimens of what to avoid looking at.

The sculpture, as usual, shows, as compared with the painting, a remarkably high level of merely technical excellence, and an equally low level of imaginative quality. The portrait busts are for the most part dull, and there are no specially striking or important works either by R.A.'s or outsiders. One misses Mr. Gilbert at his best, and the death of Mr. Onslow Ford and Mr. Bates has left a gap which so far does not show signs of being filled.

The Black and White Room cannot be called by any means representative of this branch of English art. Most of our best-known workers in this medium are conspicuously absent.

Either they do not care to show, or the Academy rejects them—one cannot pretend to guess which. The result is a dull little room which few enter, and fewer care to linger in. The low esteem in which the authorities hold "black and white" is no new thing. It was strikingly shown in their neglect, to their own lasting shame, of one of our greatest artists, the late Charles Keene. Recently Sir Walter Gilbert has done good service in directing attention in the columns of the *Times* to this neglect so far as engravers are concerned, and one hopes that his letters may lead to proper recognition being given to the claims of "black and white" generally.

No special mention has been made of the numerous animal pictures of the year, because they are reserved for notice in another article on the subject of modern animal painting, which is probably a branch of art particularly interesting to readers of COUNTRY LIFE.

J. C. C.

ON THE GREEN.

COLONEL BOGEY seems to have got the Chiltern Hundreds. He used to be a Parliamentary golfer, but the Legislature can do with him no longer; their state would be greatly more blessed if they could get rid of some other troublesome and unruly members as easily. Bogey used, for a year or two, to provide the testing qualification which reduced the numbers of the competitors in the Parliamentary handicap to manageable limits. Then the survivors, that is to say, the first sixteen, used to Kilkeny-cat each other in the ordinary

tournament way, until only one, the winner, was left standing. But now they have returned to the ancient custom of Kilkenny-cattling from the very start. The thing, in fact, is played just like the amateur championship, bar the difference caused by the handicaps. The first two rounds are to be played at Rye on May 16th, a date which will just give Mr. Eric Hambro time to get up to Muirfield to take part in the amateur championship—who can say that our Legislature is not provident?

It is curious, just as the Parliament people are giving up their qualifying rounds, that the Americans are discussing the advisability of doing the same for their amateur championship. Hitherto they have had qualifying preliminaries, not on the Bogey, but on the ordinary, scoring plan. It is, perhaps, as a return for our recognition of the Monroe Doctrine that they seem likely to pay us the compliment of assimilating the conditions of their amateur championship to ours.

Perhaps it is almost a common-place to remark how very much better the ladies seem to manage their affairs than the mere man can do. We had the ladies' championship all cut and dried and drawn some three weeks or so before the date, May 5th, of the actual play at Portrush, yet for the masculine championship it is only necessary that the names should be sent in just under a week before the meeting. What chance does this give for the discussion of chances, for the making of books—and of observations, such, for instance, as "I wonder what in the world Mrs. So-and-So entered for?" No doubt it all goes to show that women know their own minds—they can settle their plans definitely—but men cannot, without a woman to help them; but this, too, we all knew long ago; still, it is well to be reminded of it. On the other hand, there are some matters on which no one, humanly speaking, can venture to give a definite opinion; and amongst them, as it seems to me, is the question whether Vardon, Braid, or Taylor, is the most likely to win in any competition that brings the three together. And they are brought together very often. It is not out of any lack of opportunity of comparing them that the difficulty comes; it arises rather from the fact that each successive comparison seems to bring out a different result—a different winner. I think that deep down in the heart of every one of us there is a lurking conviction that Vardon has a little the best of the others; but that is only true of an English heart. No Scottish heart will permit Vardon, or Taylor either, to occupy it to the exclusion of Braid, and there will be a corner left too for Herd; and even those of us who hold by Vardon have not much evidence to show for our faith. Our belief is rather in the nature of a superstition. But the beliefs that are without proof generally are the most strong.

Among golfing events of interest in the immediate future there is the international match—both the amateur international at Muirfield, and the professional international at Prestwick. Probably it will take nothing of its representative character from the latter that it is restricted to those who are members of the Professional Golfers' Association, but what is rather a bother is that according to a resolution passed a while ago at a meeting in London, this Professional Golfers' Association has enacted that all competitions played under its auspices shall be decided with the solid gutta-percha ball. Now it is virtually certain that the great majority of the players in the open championship will use india-rubber-filled balls. That being so, it will be an obvious inconvenience, and will "cramp the style," as is said, of many, if they have to use a different kind of ball for the international match, which is so close in point of time to the championship. It is, however, quite possible for the Golfers' Association to rule that this international match is not a competition in the sense contemplated when the resolution against the rubber-filled ball was passed at its meeting. That would obviate the whole difficulty quite comfortably. But as for which side is to win, it is not so easy for us, speaking as Englishmen, to feel so comfortable about that. We claim the great Vardon as an Englishman, and we presume the claim will be admitted, in spite of Jersey being his birthplace, but after we have spoken of him, of his brother Tom, and of Taylor, as a matter of course we come to the names of others who are gallant and promising players, to be sure, but have hardly won their places on the roll of fame. Probably we must draw the line at Jersey; we hardly can say that Massey, from Biarritz, is English, just because he comes from south of the Tweed. Whereas Scotland, on the other hand, has a host of tried men and hardened match players to select from—Herd, Braid, Andrew Kirkaldy, Willie Park, Jack White, Sayers, Willie Fernie, and Kinnell (practically at home at Prestwick, where the match will be played), and plenty more whose names suggest themselves very readily. The difficulty in the selection of the Scottish representative will be in the nature of an embarrassment of riches.

There is something like the same abundance of raw material—and not so very raw, either—ready to the hand of the selectors of the Scottish amateur side too. If we could not beat them last year at Hoylake, where some of our very best were at home—it is true that one of the strongest Scots, Mr. Graham, is at home nowhere else—it is not very easy to see how we are to get on terms with them in the heart of East Lothian, with two of their leaders, Mr. Laidlay and Mr. Maxwell, knowing Muirfield so well that they could play round it blindfold. It is to be feared that Mr. Hutchings, our present amateur champion, will not be well enough to contest his title, nor do battle for England. So, on the whole, the Scottish star is ascendant, and we may begin to think that she does know something about her national game after all, although a recent correspondence makes it appear that she is in some doubt how to pronounce it.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

FROM THE FARMS.

AT REST.

THE horses in our picture typify the condition to which agriculture in the South of England has arrived at this season. Every good farmer now has done his ploughing and his hard work for the year. His seed is sown, and between now and the time for weeding, hoeing, and the like, there is a little interval of rest from the unending toil of husbandry. This period may be taken advantage of in several different ways. At places where a pedigree stock is largely kept it coincides with the beginning of the show season, and affords an opportunity for that final "doing over" which imparts the last finish to the animals that are expected to clear the exhibition of its prizes. The time is not without its anxieties on other accounts. At this period of the year a stock farm is full of young things at various stages of development, lambs, calves, foals, and young chickens, all of which deserve continual care, for if these early weeks of the little creatures' lives are not devoted to feeding and general attention, there is very little hope that they will ever attain to first-rate show form.

EWES AND LAMBS.

Now that the lambing season is over, we hear from all parts of the country that it has been a particularly good one, the Suffolk sheep having done especially well. It would not be much out of the way to say that an average of about one and three-fifths has been returned for each ewe. One pedigree flock that we know of contains three hundred ewes, and the return was just over five hundred lambs. The number of ewes lost has also been much smaller than usual, and altogether the season has been a very satisfactory one. This result is very largely to be attributed to the fineness of the weather last autumn. Of course the skilful shepherd can do much to help the prosperity of his flock, but the results this year are so very good all over the country that they show that the predominant factor in the return of lambs is good weather, combined, of course, with abundance of winter food, and it will be remembered that last year the root crop was one of the heaviest on record.

CONCERNING RAMS.

An extremely interesting experiment has been tried for some time by one of the flock-masters in East Anglia. As is well known, owners of Down and other pedigree sheep have a very great liking for very young rams—rams that are, in fact, technically lambs. Now it is very obvious that no one can form a final judgment about the quality of a ram eight months old, and the flock-master referred to, who is a great believer in older animals, has been keeping his over two years, weeding out periodically the poorer specimens among them. The consequence is that he has now as fine a lot of rams as anyone could wish to see, and he claims that economically the course he has followed is justified. This, however, is a question that ought to be worked out by means of statistics. The lambs' lambs and the rams' lambs



Walter Selfe.

REST.

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should be compared not only as regards number, but as regards weight and price. It is a matter of business results pure and simple.

BUSINESS AND FARMING.

A very eminent agriculturist once told the writer that he thought the most efficient staff for a farm would consist of a

few good clerks and some farm labourers, and it would be all the better if not one of them knew anything about agriculture. His reason for this was that he knew the science of it himself and wanted servants who would obediently and strictly carry out his wishes. This appears to have been the ideal of the editor who planned the "Farmer's Business Hand-book" (Macmillan and Co., Limited), by Isaac Phillips Roberts. It is an able little volume, and would have been extremely useful if by chance the author had belonged to this country, but he is an American, but even his accounts are presented in dollars, which is inconvenient to the plain English farmer accustomed to deal with pounds and guineas. Some of the directions, too, appear to be quite unnecessary; for example, the specimen milk report for the week beginning July 2nd might have been put in one phrase—"buy a Sandringham Recorder;" all that is given in the intricate table is presented in this useful contrivance. However, the farmer will certainly find it of great benefit to take the advice offered and keep most careful daily accounts. Such chapters as that on the "Importance of Agriculture, as a Source of National Wealth, as Exhibited by New York State, 1899," cannot be said to be of thrilling interest on this side of the Atlantic, whatever it is on the other. An English book written on the same lines as this one would be invaluable, and ought to be used as a hand-book in all our rural schools, or wherever an attempt is made to impart an agricultural education.

THE CHURNABILITY OF CREAM.

In an exceptionally good number of the *Journal of the Bath and West of England Society*, Mr. Ernest Mathews, whose book "Economies in Dairy Farming" we have just published, writes an excellent article upon the trials that have been made of the churnability of cream. We have not space to go into his elaborate figures, but the conclusions arrived at are summarised as follows: That milks containing small and irregular-sized fat globules do not churn as well as those having larger and regular-sized ones, the small fat globules being lost both in separation and in churning; that churning perfectly sweet cream results in considerable loss; that the loss of the small fat globules in separation, and in the first churning, accounts for the difference between the analytical and practical tests.

CIDER

A good deal of the *journal* is devoted to cider, which is very right and appropriate, as this beverage is so essentially a product of the West. Mr. John Ertle writes on the cultivation of cider apples, Mr. Farwell on the society's last year's exhibition of cider, and Mr. Lloyd on cider making. Mr. Lloyd says the season of 1902 was a dry one, but the apples were not smaller than usual, the probable explanation being that as the crop was small there was enough sap to nourish the growing apples adequately. However, the percentage of juice for these apples was small as compared with the average yield; indeed, Mr. Lloyd holds that the most striking characteristic of the crop is the poverty of the juice and its peculiar composition. From his remarks, we may infer that 1902 was not a good vintage year for apples.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE WRYNECK.

WRYNECKS seem to have arrived this year in some places before their fellow-migrant, the cuckoo, thereby belying their familiar provincial name of the "cuckoo's mate." Other local names for them are emmet hunter, long tongue, and snake bird, all of which, more or less accurately describe their curious habits. There is not, to my mind, a more interesting bird among our spring migrants than the wryneck. Its rich and varied plumage is among the most beautiful things in Nature, fully as protective in its way as that of the nightjar or the woodcock. Of all its rustic names, that of emmet hunter is, perhaps, the most fitting and the most descriptive. A great part of the wryneck's sustenance is taken from the nests of ants, and the rapidity and precision with which the long tongue of this bird darts in and out of its bill, annexing and swallowing, quick as thought, the ants and their eggs, is, in its way, quite as marvellous as the deft capture of flies by the chameleon. Fond of deep, reposeful woods as is this bird, it is by no means so shy a creature as the old naturalists would have one suppose. Where fruit orchards and woody gardens and shrubberies are to be found, it will, in suitable situations, come freely and build within quite a short distance of human habitations. A friend of mine, a famous traveller and sportsman, who is as fond of bird life as he is of shooting big game, is the happy possessor of a spreading and well-timbered garden in Surrey. Here he affixes to the trees a large number of nesting-boxes, and has thereby the supreme pleasure of watching many interesting birds during their courting and breeding season.

WRYNECKS NESTING.

It is wonderful how many birds, which are usually classed as rare, are thus attracted. Last spring, for instance, within the garden

and grounds, in a space of not more than four or five acres in extent, no less than two pairs of wrynecks and a pair of nuthatches made their nests in the boxes thus provided for them. In an adjacent garden two other pairs of wrynecks also nested. These boxes are among the best things of the kind I have yet seen. My friend imports them from Germany, and the total cost amounts to no more than a few pence for each receptacle. They are neat sections of forest branches, with the bark left on; a hollow is scooped out, a hole made for the entrance of the bird, and a simple lid allows the observer such facilities as he may require. The wryneck's curious faculty of twisting its neck completely round at will is very singular. Singular also are this bird's habits of strangely elongating itself, erecting the head feathers, and setting up a quaint hissing noise. These tricks are often employed for the purpose of driving off intruders, and I suppose that upon starlings and such-like disturbers of the peace they have a duly alarming effect. But these and other curious manoeuvres are also exhibited when the birds are pairing, and in the frequent combats—which, however, are not very terrible affairs—between the courting males. The wryneck is not often seen in captivity. When taken young, and reared in a big, roomy cage—for they need space more than most feathered creatures—these birds become extremely tame, as well as extremely interesting. After a time they will learn to play a game of hide-and-seek with their master, and if ants' eggs or small larvae or insects are concealed about a room, will fish out the dainties from their places of concealment with a readiness and an astuteness quite wonderful. The hen bird lies very close in her nest, and will even suffer herself to be lifted from her glossy and curiously transparent white eggs. Wrynecks, by the way, have a very wide distribution. Our English bird, for example, is found as far East as Japan, and penetrates to Senegal, Kordofan, and other parts of Africa north of the Equator.

WHEATEARS.

Whether from the coldness of this present springtime, or for some other reason, I have not seen so many wheatears as usual this year about the Sussex Downs. There can, I think, be no possible doubt that these birds are nothing like so plentiful as they used to be in this locality, and this notwithstanding the fact that for the last forty years the custom of snaring them for market has been gradually falling into disuse. Few table birds were more appreciated by our forefathers than the dainty wheatear. In the days of their great plenty they were taken by the down shepherds in their simple traps by scores of thousands, and sold at the current market price of 1d. per head. In Pennant's time—the latter part of the eighteenth century—round Eastbourne alone, as many as 1,840 dozen of these birds were annually captured. The great time for snaring them was September, when they were at their fattest, and were gathering on the South Coast for their autumn migration. I have had many interesting chats with South Down shepherds touching the capture of these birds. They are now, of course, prohibited from taking them by the Wild Birds Protection Acts, but there are men still in middle life who have snared hundreds of dozens of wheatears by the simple contrivance of a couple of sods of turf set up one against the other and a horsehair noose affixed to a peg at either entrance. I was speaking to a shepherd quite recently, who told me that fourteen or fifteen years ago, four or five dozen of these birds were taken by a man during a single day—usually about the time of wheat harvest. Another shepherd, skilled in wheatear snaring, told me that he took them so recently as seven years ago, and got as much as 4s. per dozen for them, but that the business has now come entirely to an end. This is as well. It seems a sin to eat this handsome and sprightly little bird, one of the chief ornaments of our downs, commons, and open heaths. That the migration of wheatears to Britain is far less than it was a hundred years ago, is, I think, incontestable. Whether this arises from the enormous captures of the old days is not so certain. I am inclined to think that some change has taken place in the migrating habits of these birds. It is possible that they now favour other regions in preference to our islands. Such changes do undoubtedly occur, and we have at the present time instances of birds which were once considered rare visitants and are now fairly common with us. Still, as is the case with quail, the toll levied on them during some centuries by English trapping may also have affected the numbers of wheatears now seen among us. It is pretty certain that many centuries of quail snaring in South Europe have had their effect. Seventy or eighty years ago the people of Capri netted annually in the spring migration some 150,000 quail; now they secure in a fair season no more than from 30,000 to 40,000. As for quail in this country, they now very seldom form an item of the game bag, as they used commonly to do in many localities.

PEREGRINE FALCONS.

It is a wonderful thing to me that these noble raptorial birds, which, with their grand flight, constitute one of the finest spectacles that a man may hope to see upon an English country-side, still cling so persistently to the nesting haunts where they and their forbears have been accustomed to rear their young during untold centuries. And this in spite of the fact that at the present time they are, year after year, persistently robbed of their eggs or their young. The instinct that impels these birds to haunt the cliffs where they are thus harried and persecuted must indeed be an overpowering one. I am well acquainted with a certain reach of cliffs on our southern coast where a pair or two of peregrines are constantly to be seen. These birds have, nowadays, a hard life of it. Occasionally they are shot at by some unscrupulous gunner or jealous keeper. Sometimes a peregrine is thus untimely slain. After a short interval of disappearance the survivor usually reappears with a fresh mate, procured, it is to be supposed, from some distant abiding-place far over sea, or on some lonely part of our own coastline. In the nesting season, they are, year after year, harried by the almost incessant efforts of egg-collectors or hawking men, the latter seeking the young for purposes of falconry. With the latter class of enthusiasts one can have some sympathy; after all, falconry is a fine sport, and hawking men rear the eyesses with infinite care, and a rare British bird is thus preserved, albeit in an honourable captivity. But the egg-collector is a marauder who destroys pitilessly the choicest and rarest birds of these islands—destroys them, that is to say, by the act of taking and blowing the eggs laid by the parent bird. These people are at the present time



M. Emil Frechon.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

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doing more to exterminate rare and interesting British birds than any others within or without the purview of the various Preservation Acts. They ought to be discountenanced in every possible way. I know at the present moment of peregrines which are being watched day after day along the cliffs by people who, so soon as they "spot" the nesting-place, mean to rob it of every egg. One is sorry to add that these egg-stealers manage to enlist as allies some of the Coastguards along our shore-line, a most excellent class of men, for whom one has otherwise every respect. They are pestered by egg-collectors in every possible way, and it is not surprising to find that they succumb to the

temptation of a fairly handsome bribe, and aid and abet in the capture of peregrines and other rare eggs. Without the Coastguards and their appliances for getting down cliffs, the nests of some of our rarer birds would be very hard of attainment. It might, I think, be brought to the notice of the Coast-guard authorities that this sort of traffic is carried on, and the men should be strictly prohibited from assisting in this plunder in any shape or form. The cliffs ought also to be guarded against other marauders—amateur and professional—during the nesting season. Choughs and peregrines are nowadays terribly harassed in this way, and they deserve, surely, to be better protected than they are.

H. A. B.



Willington,

Bedfordshire.

A CHANGE of owners is, more often than not, a cause for anxiety. Who can tell if the generosity or shortcomings (according to each one's way of thinking) of the old master may not be preferable to a new broom, whose sweeping-up will prove too thorough for their liking. Such an event provides the topic of the hour amongst the some 200 inhabitants of the little straggling village of Willington. It is to be hoped, however, that the calm of this old world English village will not be greatly disturbed by the change of owners.

It is a peaceful spot, this village, lying back from the high road that leads from Bedford to Cambridge, its thickly-thatched, round-topped, dormer-windowed cottages scattered here and there, singly and in groups, picturesquely irregular, on either side of the quiet lane, where no traffic unconnected with themselves ever disturbs the sleepy stillness of the place. It is hard to realise that the Willington of to-day could once have been different, so conservative is it in every line and feature.

At the time of the Norman survey, Hugh de Beauchamp was lord of the manor, which included pasture and arable lands, "wood for swine," and a mill, the rent of which was twelve shillings and a hundred eels, for the sluggish waters of the Ouse take their wandering course past the village, and are even now famous for the excellence of the eels which, after a flood, the millers trap in large numbers. By marriage with the co-heiress of the Beauchamps Willington passed to Roger de Mowbray, seventh baron, whose descendant, Thomas, the twelfth baron, became the first Duke of Norfolk in the Mowbray line. He, when Earl of Nottingham, assisted at the suffocation of the Duke of Gloucester, and Shakespeare introduces him into the first act of his "King Richard II.," putting words into his mouth that give the lie to his more than doubtful character:

"Norfolk—The purest treasure mortal times afford
Is spotless reputation; that away,
Men are but gilded loam, or painted clay.
A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest
Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast.
Mine honour is my life; both grow in one;
Take honour from me and my life is done."

There is no record of any habitation worthy the name prior to the advent of the Mowbray family at Willington. It was they who built a castle close to the river, at a point where a ford (still usable) enabled them to reach the opposite country in

safety, and, though no vestige of this mansion remains, its site is clearly traceable by the deep moats with which it was surrounded. Its ancient drawbridge is replaced by a raised footway, and the moats, either dry or overgrown with reeds and self-sown bushes, are all that is left "from the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,"—while through the inner court of the castle speeds the puffing engine of the London and North Western Railway as it plies between Cambridge and Bedford. In this Castle of Willington, the Earls and Dukes of Norfolk sometimes "lay for a state" until, that family dying out in the male line, the place reverted to the descendants of the first Duke's daughters, and John Howard ("Jockey of Norfolk"), created Duke of Norfolk in 1483, became its possessor. Some fifty years later the property was secured by Act of Parliament to the Gostwicks, who were no newcomers to the neighbourhood even at that early period, as we find a brass in the church to Robert Gostwick, or, as it was originally spelt, "de Gostwyke," dated 1316. Their name is inseparably associated with Willington,

for to them the village owes its old Perpendicular church of St. Lawrence, with its curious double chancel. They built it, upheld it, and added to it the mortuary chapel, within whose walls are the many monuments of their dead race. The most noted member of the family was Sir John Gostwick, who erected in the park on the west side of the church "a sumptuous new building of brike, and tymbre à *fundamentis* in it, with a conduit of water derived in lead pipes." This house was afterwards destroyed by fire, a large stack of chimneys, which still exist, incorporated with a modern farm-dwelling, alone escaping. It also was protected by moats, which, like those about the older castle, were in direct navigable communication with the river. Sir John built, about the same time, five substantial outhouses, of which three were subsequently pulled down, the last and largest being still in existence in 1850, and in it was space sufficient to turn "a coach and six"; it was probably used as a training school for horses. The remaining two are of Perpendicular architecture, with curious stepped gables; one of them, evidently intended for a stable, has an upper storey where slept the grooms, and the other, yet more striking, is still devoted to



Mrs. D. Broughton. INTERIOR OF DOVECOTE Copyright

its original purpose, and shelters innumerable pigeons. This dovecote, or rather two dovecotes, for a partition divides it in the centre, has its solid walls of nearly 3ft. in thickness, completely lined inside with cavities between the stones,

capable of containing thousands of pigeons' nests. When the door is opened, a cloud of whirring wings soar upwards, and the frightened birds find egress through open spaces in the divided roof. The materials used in the construction of these buildings were said to have been brought from Bedford and Newnham Priors, demolished about that time.

Sir John Gostwick was a successful time-server; he managed not only to ingratiate himself with Henry VIII., but so to adapt his conduct to suit the changing moods of his master as to retain his uncertain favour. Sir John's mother having acted as foster-mother to King Henry, was, doubtless, a bond of union between them, and he profited largely by his connection with Royalty, growing richer as the years went by, while more and more lands fell to his share, both in Bedfordshire and elsewhere. He cultivated Wolsey's friendship so long as he remained in power, and through his influence obtained the Act of Parliament that robbed the Duke of Norfolk—Wolsey's bitter enemy—of the castle of Willington, and secured it to his son. Then, with a change of politics, not altogether unexampled at the present day, he, at the fall of that prelate, insinuated himself into the good graces of Cromwell, altering his tactics afresh to agree with the opinions of the hour. He was given the appointment of Master of the Horse to Henry VIII., and, according to tradition, had his training stables at Willington, which would account for the erection of so many large out-buildings. The mortuary chapel, which was added by him to the old church, has suspended on one of its walls the helmet he wore when, as Master of the Horse, he accompanied the King to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. This crude headgear, surmounted by a great oaken crest, was of such weight as to require supports attaching it to the breastplate and from thence to the saddle. Amongst other relics preserved in this sanctuary are a tabard and a fighting helmet, both of which belonged to William Gostwick, who died in 1547. Here, too, in a state of perfect repair is the magnificent altar tomb erected to the memory of Sir William Gostwick, the recumbent figure of the knight clad in armour, his hands clasped as if in prayer, being beautifully carved in alabaster and sheltered by a wooden canopy. Close by a mural monument portrays Sir Edward Gostwick, his wife, and family; the latter, kneeling below their parents, consist of two sons and five daughters, and in their midst



Mrs. Delves Broughton.

OLD DOVECOTE.

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HELMET WORN BY SIR J. GOSTWICK.

a cradle with the anchor of hope, showing that one child had died in infancy. The writing on this tablet tells of Sir Edward's wife that "like a true turtle, when her husband died, she pined away and died too." But one of the most interesting objects in the church is the ponderous volume lying on the lectern, a copy of the first edition of the authorised Bible, dated 1611, bound in solid leather, with brass clamps and clasps. Another curiosity stands on a bracket above the reading-desk, and is part of an old hour-glass that, in Oliver Cromwell's time, was intended as a check upon the verbose preacher. Whilst noticing the interior of the church, the antiquated method of lighting must not be overlooked, for in these days of gas and electricity such fascinating simplicity is rarely met with, and the worm-eaten wooden pillars supporting two cross-pieces, on either end of which is fixed a candle, are, though not a brilliant illumination, more in harmony with their surroundings than would be the most approved bunch of electric lights.

Sir John Gostwick attended King Henry VIII. and Queen Katherine Howard in their progress to the North in 1541, and had the honour of entertaining them at his newly-built house at Willington, an interesting visit for the Queen, to whose family the neighbouring castle had until now belonged, and which, it is quite possible, may have been her birthplace. Little did she dream, amidst all the pomp and circumstance connected with this royal journeying, that four months later she was to suffer on the scaffold, her execution hastened, it is supposed, by the Protestants taking alarm at a council of state presided over by Bishop Gardiner, and held at this time in Gostwick's house, he being the declared enemy of Cranmer.

Royalty came again to Willington in 1567, when Queen Elizabeth was the guest of another John Gostwick, and it is recorded that during this visit there was "lost from Her Majesty's back at Willington, the 16th July, one aiglet of gold, enamelled white."

For many generations the Gostwicks lived and flourished, but the day dawned when their old home knew them no more. During the greater part of the reigns of King William and



Mrs. Delves Broughton.

THE CHURCH, OLD STABLE, AND DOVECOTE.

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Queen Anne, Sir William Gostwick represented Bedford in Parliament, and the repeated elections, combined with his losses at cards, proved his ruin. The property was sold in chancery, the Duchess of Marlborough becoming its purchaser. She it was who, report had it, helped in Sir William's downfall by so skilfully arranging a looking-glass behind him at the card-table, that the hand he held was in it exposed to her view, and thus his money found its way into her pocket.

In 1774 Willington, being again in the market, was bought by the Duke of Bedford, and from that day to the present time it has remained with the Russells, who have proved themselves worthy lords of the manor, their liberality adding in many ways to the comfort and welfare of the village. By them the drainage has been improved, making it an exceptionally healthy place; a school built, at a cost of £1,000; the Wesleyan chapel, formerly but a wooden erection attached to one of the neighbouring farmhouses, bodily transferred to its present site in the



Mrs. Delves Broughton. THE FORGE AT THE END OF THE LANE.

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middle of the village, and cased with brick and stone; not to mention the restoration of the church and the helping, with a lavish hand, in the expense of recasting its peal of bells. No wonder, then, that the inhabitants should be averse to a change of masters; no wonder, as they gossip over their small purchases at the village shop, or linger by the forge at the end of the lane, when, on certain days of the week, the smith lights up his fire, and his swinging hammer makes the old walls resound, that their future prospects under new conditions should be their favourite theme. The Willington of to-day is as interesting in their eyes as it ever was; to them its glory has not departed, although knights and their clattering retinues no longer awake the echoes of the road. They care not that

"There is not of that castle gate
Its drawbridge and portcullis weight
Stone, bar, moat, bridge or barrier left,"

their little world is all the world to them!

EDITH BROUGHTON.

GATTON PARK.

IT would be difficult to suggest a finer situation than that occupied by Gatton Park, the country seat of Mr. Jeremiah Colman. It stands on a chalk ridge three or four miles out of Reigate, and commands a view of the exquisitely broken and undulating Surrey hills with their scarps and quarries of white chalk mingling so harmoniously with the general green. And the estate itself, though not large, is an

extremely pleasant one, showing an endless variety of deep glades and steep hills. The park is well wooded, and contains a number of trees that would stand comparison with any of their kind in England. One wych elm especially attracted our notice. It is falling into decay now, and one of the giant boughs has had to be propped up, but even in ruin it is magnificent. The soil, in fact, appears to be highly suitable to trees, as in the garden



GOING TO THE WATER.

there is a pear tree trained against the wall that measures 96ft. 6in. from tip to tip of its branches.

The house itself is a very handsome one, but we must defer the illustration of its marble interior to a future occasion. Outside it there is a curious little building, known as the Gatton Town Hall, standing like a temple in a grove of trees. It is interesting as pointing to the time before the purchase of Gatton by the fifth Lord Monson, when it returned two members to Parliament. His privilege was accorded in 1451, and continued till 1832. It does not seem that the entire number of burgesses in the constituency numbered more than twenty, and, practically, the two members of Parliament were chosen by the lord of the manor. "When Sir Mark Wood was proprietor, in the early part of the present century, five or six of the burghage dwellings were occupied by weekly tenants, and, consequently, he possessed the sole right to elect the borough representatives to the House of Commons." The manor is mentioned in "Doomsday Book" as being held by one Herfrid. The name Gatton (Gate Town) seems to point to it having been by the Pilgrim's Way, just as Reigate (Ridge Gate) carries a similar reference. In the main valley in front of the house are three fine sheets of water, which, in the proper season, are very attractive to the angler, several pike of immense size having been taken from them. At our visit one of the most conspicuous features was a swan which, having gathered together a mountain of dry sticks, had laid her eggs on the top, and was peacefully brooding on them, while her lord and master, with his ruffled feathers and angry black head, swam up and down the water like a sentry on guard. Hundreds of birds nest in the grounds, and even the casual visitor was able to find nests in April.



BY THE LAKESIDE.

Mr. Colman is extremely interested in agriculture, and his tastes find expression in two very different ways. As is well known, his flock of Southdowns is one of the best in the country, and has carried away first and championship prizes at all our leading shows; in this respect Mr. Colman has no more worlds to conquer. It was an interesting time, towards the end of April, when the writer went to see Gatton Park; the lambing season was over, and the ewes and their offspring were grazing where they were taken in the park close by the water. The yearling and two year old rams which we saw were in their yards under careful preparation for the show



FIVE SHEARLING EWES.

season into which we are now coming. Mr. Colman exhibits in all that we may call national shows, and also in the chief county shows, of which the first to come on now is that for Devonshire, and, of course, sheep require a considerable amount of preparation before being fit for the show.

The name of Colman has for many years been pre-eminent amongst the breeders of Southdown sheep. So long ago as 1869, the late Mr. J. J. Colman (uncle of the owner of Gatton) established a pedigree flock at Easton, near Norwich, by purchases from the most famous flocks of that day, viz., Elmham, Buckland, Streetly, and Goodwood, with the object of improving, if possible, this old and favourite breed. Selections from the Easton flock soon took a leading place in the show-yard, and from that time to the present day that position has been maintained.

In consequence of Mr. J. J. Colman's death in 1899 the Easton flock was dispersed, and at the sale Mr. Jeremiah Colman purchased upwards of 200 ewes, which comprised all the best lots; his object being to continue at Gatton Park the pure strain of Southdowns which had for so many years



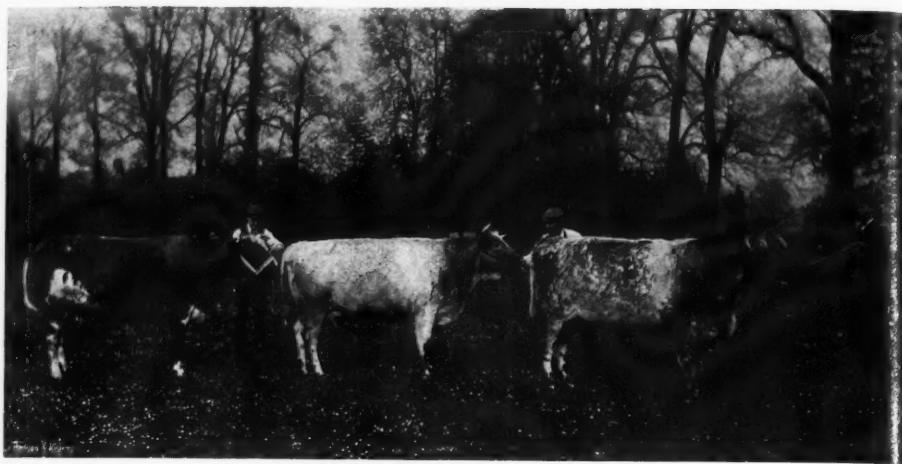
SOME OF THE FLOCK.

been associated with his family. From these purchases about 100 of the choicest animals were selected as the foundation of the Gatton flock, to which Mr. Colman has since added about 25 ewes, the best specimens obtainable from the flocks of H.M. the King, Earl Bathurst, Sir James Blyth, Bart., and Mr. Hugh Gorringe.

Throughout the history of this flock—both at Easton and Gatton—prize-winning rams have always been retained; among them have been upwards of half a score of first prize animals at the Royal, and a still greater number of winners of similarly coveted trophies at the Royal Counties, Bath and West of England, Sussex County, Tunbridge Wells, and other noted shows. Mr. Colman also makes a point of reserving for his flock all ewes that gain awards, no matter how tempting may be the offer he gets to sell them.

This brief outline may perhaps sufficiently explain how this celebrated flock has been established, and how it is now maintained. Although it is one of the smallest of the registered pure-bred flocks, it is also perhaps the most noted amongst home and foreign breeders; and in the showyard the position it holds certainly demonstrates that numbers in a flock count for little against thoughtful selection and careful breeding. On these points it speaks volumes when we say that from the produce of 100 ewes Mr. Colman was last year able to win the Blythwood Challenge Bowl, seven championships, six reserves for championships, seventeen first prizes, and six second prizes, besides lesser awards.

These results must be extremely gratifying to Mr. Colman; but it is in seeing his Southdowns roam about the lovely undulating park at Gatton, amidst such delightful scenery, that he derives his chief pleasure, and one can well understand the pride he feels

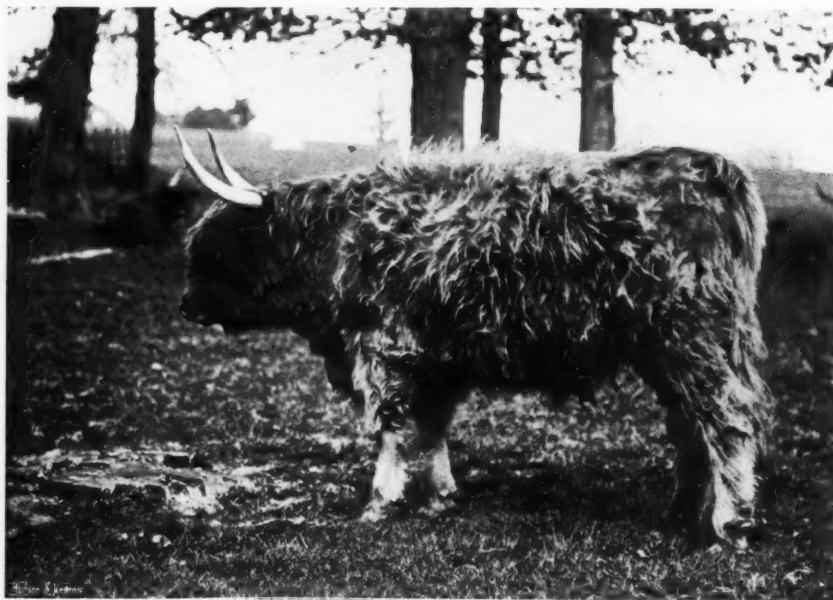


THREE GREAT HEIFERS.

in pointing them out to his friends. The shorthorns may be regarded as a recent introduction, for it was only in July, 1900, that Mr. Colman first entered the circle of shorthorn breeders by

purchasing, after a keen contest with H.M. the King's agent, Lady 24th at Mr. Henry Dudding's sale at Riby for £210. That purchase was much discussed amongst shorthorn breeders, because, while Lady 24th was sufficiently good to be noticed at the Royal and other shows, and was half-sister to Lady 21st, sold at the same sale for £360, yet she was white in colour, and not remarkable in shape. Mr. Colman has wisely reserved her for breeding. Her first calf, Lady Mary, by Longford Lavender, will make her first appearance at this year's shows; and her second calf, by Hayle

Speculator, will, if all goes well, be no disgrace to his breeder next year. For these reasons Lady 24th has not been dethroned from her place in the Gatton herd.



A HIGHLANDER FROM HOME.

Purchases were afterwards made as follows: Four of the best cows from the late Mr. Talbot Crosbie's famous herd in Ireland, which included the finest specimens of the Booth shorthorns; three from the late Mr. Wyatt's herd at Aylesbury, which comprised the best specimens of the Silence and Ruth tribes; and from two, purchased from Mr. Lawson of Warham, the Inglewoods are brought in; the Foggathorpes are added by Lady Rose, bought from Mr. T. Mace, in Gloucestershire; and coupled with these are a few extraneous prize-winners, bought here and there from the best-known breeders. But Mr. Colman, as the founder of a new herd, has gone somewhat outside the acknowledged limits, and has purchased a few choice specimens of comparatively short-lineage shorthorns, which include such well-known animals as Hawthorn Gem III., Stella 3rd, Hawthorn Flower, Adeline, and Alice Hawthorn, all daughters of Cairo, and which between them have won already some sixty awards in the showyard.

He has also added a few other choice heifers who have already figured prominently in the showyard, notably



ANXIOUS PARENTS.

Hawthorn Queen (winner of eighteen first prizes), Hovingham Olive (winner of three firsts), Corona, Albion's Bloom, Lady Somerset 9th, Juliet, Juniper, and a few others, all prize-winners. Whether Mr. Colman will succeed in his ambitions as a breeder of shorthorns remains to be seen. The first calf he bred, Lord Gatton, gained many prizes in the North of England, and no doubt this year he will figure with equal prominence.

As an owner of shorthorns his name is already widely known, and in time he will, without doubt, take a foremost place as a breeder. The pastures round the lakes of Gatton lend themselves to the breeding of high-class stock, and Mr. Colman's interest and wealth are sufficient to ensure success; but in any case his ventures must be on a limited scale, for although he is a large landowner, he only farms some 350 acres.

The Scotch cattle are purchased annually, mainly on account of their picturesque appearance in the park. Twenty are bought each year. They do well, but if kept more than two years lose their shaggy coat; hence the frequent purchases.



GATTON TOWN HALL.



THE QUINCES.

THE Quince seems to have fallen into neglect in English gardens, even as a tree or shrub, whichever one is pleased to call it, for the pleasure ground or edge of some woodland near the house. It is called a fruit tree, but it is as rare in the fruit as in the flower garden, though very beautiful at all stages, from the time the woolly buds open till the fruit has put on its yellow colouring and scents the air with its fragrance. The Quince is a *Pyrus*, *P. Cydonia*, formerly called *Cydonia* only, and seems to appreciate most a warm place, where it will grow between 12ft. and 15ft. high. Its native country is still a mystery, but whatever its native land, there is a good use for it in English gardens apart from the value of the fruits for flavouring, and in the present revival of gardening it should not be forgotten. This want of interest in a small tree we have been taught to regard as a necessary feature of every garden is referred to in "Wood and Garden," p. 129, where the following words occur: "How seldom does one see Quinces planted for ornament, and yet there is hardly any small tree that better deserves such treatment. Some Quinces planted about eight years ago are now perfect pictures, their lissom branches borne down with the load of great deep yellow fruit, and their leaves turning to a colour almost as rich and glowing. The old English rather round-fruited kind, with the smooth skin, is the best both for flavour and beauty—a mature tree without leaves in winter has a remarkably graceful, arching, almost weeping growth. The other kind is of a rather more rigid form, and though its woolly-coated, pear-shaped fruits are larger and strikingly handsome, the whole tree has a coarser look, and just lacks the attractive grace of the other. They will do fairly well almost anywhere, though they prefer a rich loamy soil, and a cool, damp, or even swampy place." Another Quince of rare charm is the "japonica" of English gardens, but, to be more accurate, *Pyrus* or *Cydonia japonica*. It is very strong in growth, leafy, and has a comfortable look, especially when against some old sheltered wall, where the crimson flowers will be seen before January is over. April, however, is its proper flowering month, and then the whole shrub is bright with blossom. Though a shrub for a wall it is also very beautiful in the open garden without support of any kind. There are many varieties, but our love for the type has not altered by the acquisition of forms of it. Knaphill Scarlet is the deepest of any, and, perhaps, the most worthy of notice; but there are pure white, pink, salmon, and other shades. Another feature is the fruit. It is hard and astringent, but makes an excellent preserve. *P. Maulei* is less known than *japonica*, but is quite as charming. It is dwarfier, and the flowers are smaller, warm orange-scarlet in colour, and cover the slender shoots. The fruits are yellow, and have an aromatic smell. Both this and *P. japonica* are useful to cut from for the house. A big bowlful of either is very ornamental.

HYACINTH AND OTHER BULBS AFTER FLOWERING.

A wasteful custom in many places is to destroy Hyacinth and other bulbs after they have flowered in pots, or to try to grow them again in the same way. Bulbs flowered in pots are rarely a success the following year, no matter how slightly forced, but there is no reason whatever why they should not be planted in the woodland or odd corners which are flowerless. There they will in time become almost naturalised, and lose the "stodgy" form of those grown in pots. A corner in the garden of the writer has been blue with Hyacinths for some time past, the "refuse" of two years ago.

SPARMANNIA AFRICANA—A PLANT FOR THE GREENHOUSE.

In the noble temperate house at Kew, a plant called *Sparmannia africana* is flowering with conspicuous freedom. The flower is very pretty, and we often receive it to name from readers who are happy in possessing it. Few greenhouse plants give less trouble, and few flower over so long a season; it may almost be described as perpetual. The plants at Kew are standards, with stems 4ft. to 5ft. high; the heads are globular, and 4ft. across. They are in small tubs, and therefore the root room is restricted, precisely the condition the *Sparmannia* enjoys. This treatment has resulted in short, sturdy, somewhat stunted wood, with a head of flowers at the end of each shoot. The soil used is loam and leaf mould, with some half-inch bones placed over the drainage, which is composed of the usual

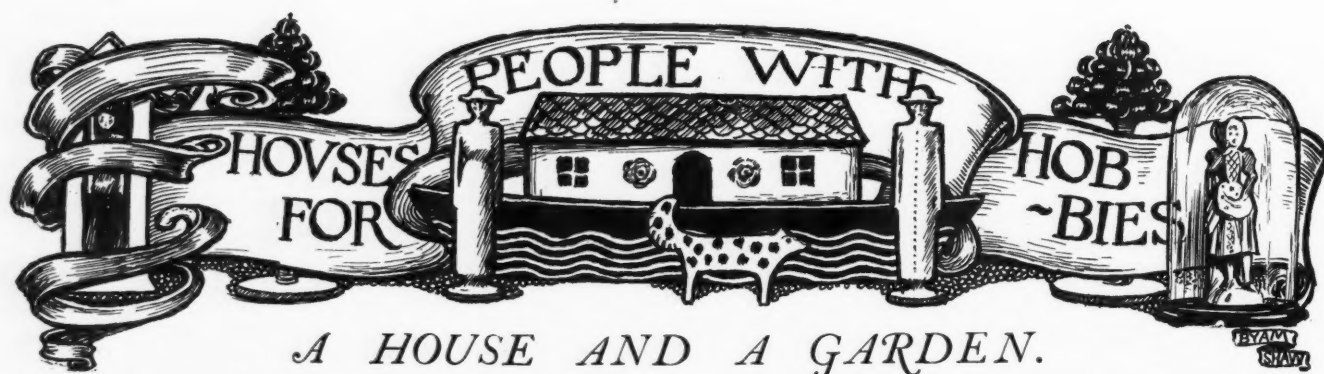
crocks. After flowering the branches are well cut back, and the plants are kept fairly close until growth begins again, when they are placed in a sunny, airy house without fire heat; they remain in this house until flowers again appear. The flowers are snow white, relieved by tufts of yellow, purple-tipped stamens, and the leaves are large and hairy. Small plants in pots are as good as anything one can well have in the greenhouse at this time.

RAISING HARDY FLOWERS FROM SEED.

This is a timely note, and raising hardy flowers from seed is an enjoyable pastime. Some time ago a note appeared in the *Garden* from a practical gardener in reference to this way of getting a stock. The note is as follows: "Propagation of perennials from seed, at any rate on an extensive scale, has only recently been adopted in the majority of private gardens, but now that really first-class things are secured in this way when seed is obtained from those firms who make a speciality of hardy flowers, it may safely be recommended as an easy and interesting process. If good plants are wanted for next autumn seed should be sown at once. My friend, Mr. William Barr, always recommends sowing in boxes, but where large quantities of each species or variety are not required I prefer some low two or three light frames resting on an ash bottom; the plants have more scope here, and do not dry up so quickly if transplanting cannot be promptly attended to; indeed, if sufficient room is available, the plants may be thinned out in the drills, and those that remain can stand until they can be shifted to permanent quarters. If they show signs of deterioration before this can be effected they can receive some doses of liquid manure in a weak form. Old potting soil that has been sifted forms an excellent compost for seed sowing; if a little on the stiff side fine leaf soil and a dash of road sand can be added. If any seeds sown are very small it will be advisable to sprinkle a little sand along the drills instead of filling these in. The question of selection of different species and varieties is a matter for individual requirements; it is, however, a tolerably safe rule to go in for those things that are alike gay on the border and useful in a cut state." To this we may add that May is the time for sowing biennials, as Canterbury Bells, Foxgloves, and Antirrhinums; and a biennial means a plant sown one year to flower the next. Our love for Canterbury Bells might be called extravagant, as we plant them in every border, and have a large group of the clear, pure pink variety upon the terrace, but in many places it is never seen. Unless a personal dislike to the flower exists, we advise its free use when the colours chosen are good and the flowers are not coarse and therefore ugly. A big flabby-looking Canterbury Bell is not pretty. We have soft lavender, deep purple, pink, blue, and pure white, all with flowers of moderate size and single. No double variety is allowed in the garden; it is monstrous and without charm. The seed may be sown out of doors in mid-May and during June. Sow thinly, and transplant in autumn to the places in which they are to flower.

THE BLUE WATER-LILIES.

In the new monthly magazine, *Flora and Sylva*, first part, there is a letter from Mr. Beamish, of Ashbourne, Gloucestre, Cork, with an illustration of the beautiful *Nymphaea stellata*, Berlin var., in the open air. Of course the South of Ireland is a favoured spot, and to attempt to do in the Midlands and North what is accomplished in the South is only to court failure. Elsewhere, as at Gunnersbury, near London, the water in the open-air tank is artificially warmed. Mr. Beamish writes: "The first plant, for which I was indebted to the kindness of Mr. Moore, of Glasnevin Gardens, Dublin, flowered vigorously in a pond during the summer of 1901, and in the autumn was lifted after the first frost and gradually dried off in a tub. Towards the end of February of last year (1902) the crown appeared to be dead; but closer examination disclosed the fact that eighteen small offshoots had sprung into existence. These were divided and were grown on in separate tubs filled with water and placed in a greenhouse, where the temperature varied from 45deg. to 70deg. Fahr. The young plants developed rapidly, and some were finally placed in the open air in May. The crowns were placed within 6in. of the surface of the water, which nowhere exceeded a depth of more than 2ft., and great care was taken throughout the summer not to allow more water into the pond than would make up for the loss from evaporation and soakage. By this means the danger of any sudden fall in the temperature was diminished. The soil used is derived from the old red sandstone formation, and contains 75 per cent. of moderately fine sand. The 'top spit' of this soil was mixed with one-third part of well-decayed horse manure and peat litter, and the mixture was placed in the pond on the top of the puddling-clay. This clay consists of 55 per cent. of small angular sandstone fragments, coarse and fine sand, and 45 per cent. of clay and organic matter. There are only traces of lime. The result has been that as many as twenty-six flowers and buds have been counted on a single plant, and the plants have continuously flowered throughout the past summer and autumn."



THE house which we illustrate this week may be studied with interest from three different points of view. First and foremost it is the house of a man with a hobby—viz., rose-growing and wall-gardening. Secondly, it is a superb instance of what can be accomplished in a very short space of time. Not more than three years ago an aged and ruining wall was the only building here, and eighteen months ago this fair garden was little more than a waste, overgrown with rank docks and nettles. Thirdly, the building is as characteristic a specimen of the style of Mr. E. L. Lutyens as is extant at the present moment. One cannot help wondering if, when beginning this work, he clearly foresaw in his imagination the building as it stands to-day. We can imagine a poet some four or five years ago, standing in this quiet lane and looking at the rustic village, building here his dream-house, with ancient boundary walls whereon herbs and flowers grew, fragrant and old-fashioned, here a mass of ivy hiding the brickwork, and there a spray of roses blushing above it or shyly peeping over. As a matter of fact, such a thought very often came to the mind of one who spent many a summer hour looking at the lichened old walls that had stood there for centuries. He

looked and dreamed, and wondered what sort of house they could possibly have enclosed, and though there was little to guide his fancy, the situation and certain traditions that linger about the place suggested at least that it had been a residence for learned scholars and ecclesiastics, who doubtless paced its walks and avenues, thinking out ideas that may be enshrined in dusty mediæval quartos now worth their weight in gold. The only noises that ever came to them—the only noises to be heard now—were the cawing of rooks in the rookery, the twittering of the birds among the apple blossoms, and the water falling in a fountain.

The poet's dream came true. So naturally has the house been planned that it seems to have grown out of the landscape rather than to have been fitted into it. No conceivable modern building could harmonise more perfectly with the village, the old church that stands opposite, and the woodlands rising far away on the edge of the horizon.

But it is time to cease admiring from the outside, and to approach for the purpose of closer observation. The style of Mr. Lutyens is now very well known, and nowhere could a more characteristic expression of it be studied than in the house we illustrate in our pages to-day. As we





SOUTH-WEST ASPECT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE ORCHARD STEPS.

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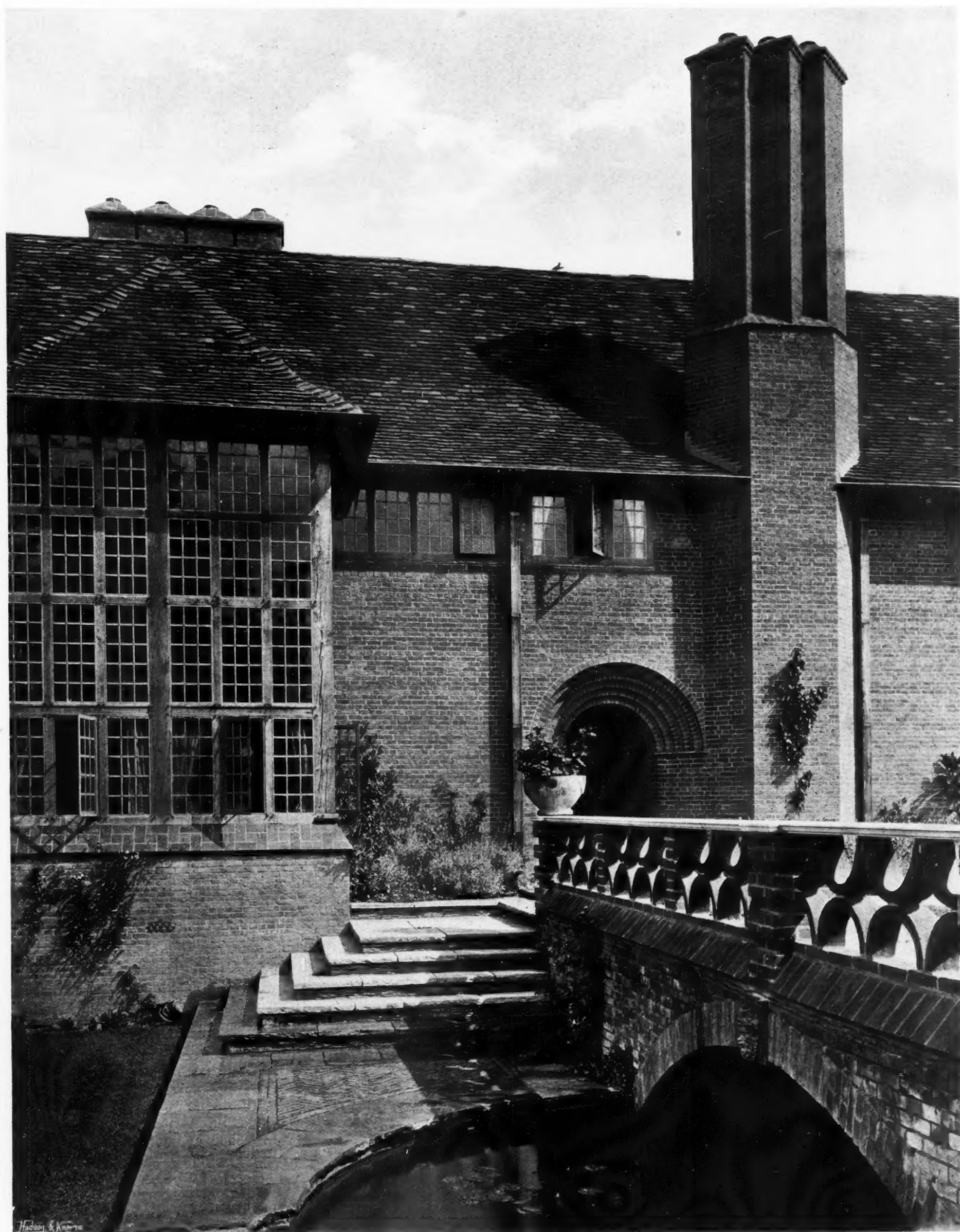
THE PUMP COURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

approach from the village we are at once attracted by the aspect of the external wall, with its touches of grey, red, and green, and the slope of its crest gay with splendid clumps of stonecrop, wallflowers, white tufted arabis, golden alyssum, and other beautiful things. We have learned at the outset that this, above all things, is a garden house. In the wall that attracted

arches of plain character, excellent in brickwork, and lightsome through the use of chalk in the inner walls, leads to the doorway, which is of fine English oak.

Before, however, we enter the house, we are tempted into a little courtyard on the right, which fills a space between the house, the cloister walk, and the external wall—a cool and



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THE HALL WINDOW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

us is a fine arched doorway, with an excellent gate of hammered iron, forming the entrance, and ere it opens we have had a glimpse of the features within. We have seen that the house is of red brick, with a light, pleasing, and not quite familiar tone, and that all is simple, domestic, and beautiful, high tiled roofs and bold stacks of chimneys cresting the structure, with a curious and characteristic vane. A cloister-way, with round

pleasant retreat, indeed, in the hot days of summer, with a basin in the centre. A faun pressing a wine-skin feeds this with water, and forms a tiny poem in itself. On one side of the court is a splendid leaden tank, finely worked, and bearing the date 1778, from which water runs in a zigzag course cut in the flagging on its way to the basin. There various water plants flourish, and disposed about the enclosure are magnificent pots



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GRASS PATHS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE PERGOLA FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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FROM THE CROQUET LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of agapanthus, the blue African lily, which, in due season, proudly lifts its azure crowns in sun or shade. There is something peculiarly satisfying to the eye in this cool and tranquil place, and, as we look across and through the cloister, we see another court, lying to the east, which has the garden on one side and on the other a multitude of roses fringing the ancient exterior wall.

But it is now time to enter the house itself, and through the open door an admirable vista is disclosed. The cloister-like air is preserved by the succession of round arches in the entrance hall, and there is the same aspect of coolness and repose arising from the use of white chalk and red brick, contrasted with the delicate brown of the oak. Right through the house runs this passage-way, and through the entrance at the other end we have a fine outlook over the terraces of the garden beyond. On the left as we enter is the oaken staircase, with an excellent balustrade and newel posts, all admirable, plain, and substantial, and strongly characteristic of the reserve and repose that reign throughout the house. On the right is the great hall, a spacious and beautiful apartment, with a lofty open roof, framed with massive beams of oak, and braces and other structural timbers cut from the curved boughs of the trees. The same framing is seen at the ends of the hall, where the spaces between the timbers are filled in with chalk, the effect being admirable. The great fireplace is widely arched, and the walls within it are of herring-bone brickwork. The iron fireback, dated 1611, has the arms and garter of James I., and doubtless came from one of the old Sussex foundries, in which, for a century and a-half at least, the hammer of the craftsman has ceased to ring. Opposite to the fire is the lofty bay, or oriel, of many lights, with oaken mullions and transoms and leaded panes, through which we gain a lovely prospect of the garden. Here, in the hall, and afterwards in the other rooms, the visitor divines that all has been planned with wise forethought, and that each window is placed so as to give a view of the garden. There is much oak-work and panelling in the hall, and old pewter and brass and a hundred things are there to delight the collector.

Entered through the hall is the dining-room, which has a long carved table of ancient date. As elsewhere in the house the pegged structural oak work shows in the walls, and the whole is finished in simple and admirable style. Here it may be noted that the beams still bear the adze-mark of the carpenter, and thus we are brought face to face, as it were, with the craftsman. Then, at the other end of the hall, entered from the lobby we came in by, is the parlour, likewise furnished and plenished with oak, and having a quaint fireplace and windows. The stairs lead up to the long gallery, which runs east and west behind the upper part of the hall, and has an open roof, with substantial beams and braces curved in the natural crook of the oak, and a fireplace as attractive as that below. The bedrooms are in appropriate style, and the mind of the architect has directed the character of the furniture.

We are now to pass out into the garden which adorns, and is a part of, this beautiful house. We see that in

its features there has been the planning of an experienced mind, and that fancy and imagination have had their scope in moulding the character of the ground. Here are terraces where one can loiter and recall his Chaucer:

"Now was there
maid fast by the
townes wall
A gardyn faire, and
in the corneres set
Ane herbere grene,
with wandis long
and small
Railit about; and so
with trees set
Was all the place,
and hawthorn
hegis knit,
That lyf was non
walking there
for by,
That myght within
scarce ony wight
aspie."

Here is a pergola sweet with flowers and clambering roses, a bowling-green and a tennis lawn, water and wall gardening in perfection, and the orchard beyond. And the hand of the artist is all the more visible when bloom is most profuse, because the plants have been cunningly arranged to produce grades and shades and harmonies of colour. Here are no wild fantastic discords or glaring effects, but the roses are so arranged as to merge their



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ROSES AND YEWS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

various shades in a beauty that is grave almost to the point of sadness.

When the building of the house began, the enclosure, where now lies the beautiful terraced garden, was a mass of nettles, but the orchard was there, and had been planted some forty years ago. It is particularly worthy of note, for the encouragement of those who would create gardens such as this, that the effects shown in the pictures were all attained within about eighteen months from the first planting. Much

wise planning was required before the garden could actually be begun. There were to be terraces of simple sort, with low retaining walls, which should give the fullest opportunities to the wall-gardener, and these low walls, some of brick and some of stone, should be laid in earth only, so that plants could find congenial rootage in the interstices. Provision should be made also for the beauties of water gardening, and there was a further outlook to the time



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SOUTH END OF PERGOLA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE END OF THE WATER GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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CLUSTER ROSES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

when a bog garden should be created, which is even now beginning at the lower end of the orchard, fed by the drainage from the water effects higher up.

Issuing from the arched doorway on the south or garden side we find ourselves upon a flagged terrace, with something of the character of a bridge, which has descents on two sides—on the south to the lower garden and on the west to the lawn. On the west is a balustrade with brick arches, overlooking the lawn which lies in front of the hall, and extends to the other end of the garden. Here a simple double stairway leads up to a point of vantage, for the outlook to the east. When we have descended by a short flight of stone steps from the terrace to the level of this lawn garden we see that the terrace is on this side under-arched, and that there is a stone-edged basin partly shadowed by it. From the mouth of a grotesque leaden head in the keystone issues a fan-shaped stream of water, which falls into the basin, and then into the long narrow stone-edged channel, which runs lengthwise through the lawn garden towards the observatory point at the other end. Just in the middle of the garden the channel widens into a square basin, where, upon a pedestal, is a bronze boy with a dolphin upon his shoulder, from whose mouth issues a jet of water. Here, it must be observed that the stonework has come straight from the hand of the craftsman, like the oak in the house itself. It is rough at the edges, and gives lodgment to rock-growing plants. The effect is particularly good in the water channel alluded to, and the yellow flag and other irises are grown, with the water forget-me-not, the bog bean, and other plants, while the basins are well plenished with glorious water-lilies.

At the west end of the house is a bowling-green enframed by yew hedges, which, although quite young, have made extraordinary progress, and on the north side of it is a useful experimental garden. The turf is everywhere of the best, and it is truly remarkable that such fine lawns, grown from seed, should have attained such perfection within so short a period.

Let us now retrace our steps, and ascend once more to the bridge terrace, and, passing a sundial which stands there, pursue our way eastward to where the pergola runs north and south in that part of the garden. The arrangement is most satisfactory and promises glorious effects. The piers of brick are alternately square and round, and support oaken beams with cross pieces, towards which beautiful plants are growing freely. Here are climbing roses, clematis in glorious masses, and the beautiful Japanese vine. Now we begin to taste some of the beauties of the wall-gardening. The walls of the house itself are left architecturally plain, save that here and there a rose, a magnolia, or a vine is allowed to go upward.

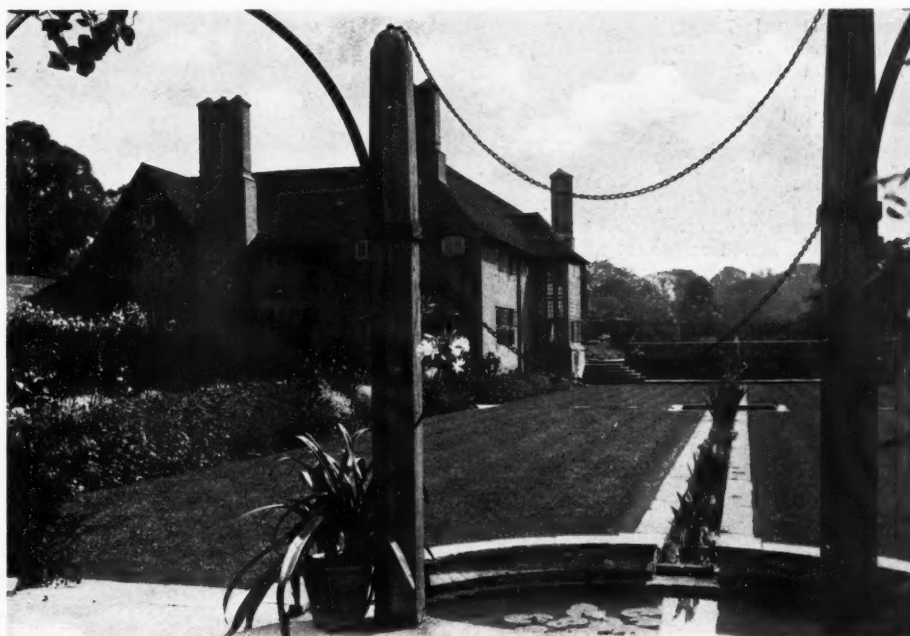
But it is to the low terraced walls that we look for the glorious effects, which are to be produced by the bold use of those plants which love to thrust their roots into the crannies or crevices of brick or stonework. Golden alyssum, snowy arabis, the lovely purple aubrietia, and a multitude of other beautiful plants are thus encouraged to grow and flourish along the terrace walls, contrasting with the warm brick and the garland roses which overhang.



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ON THE LOWER TERRACE.

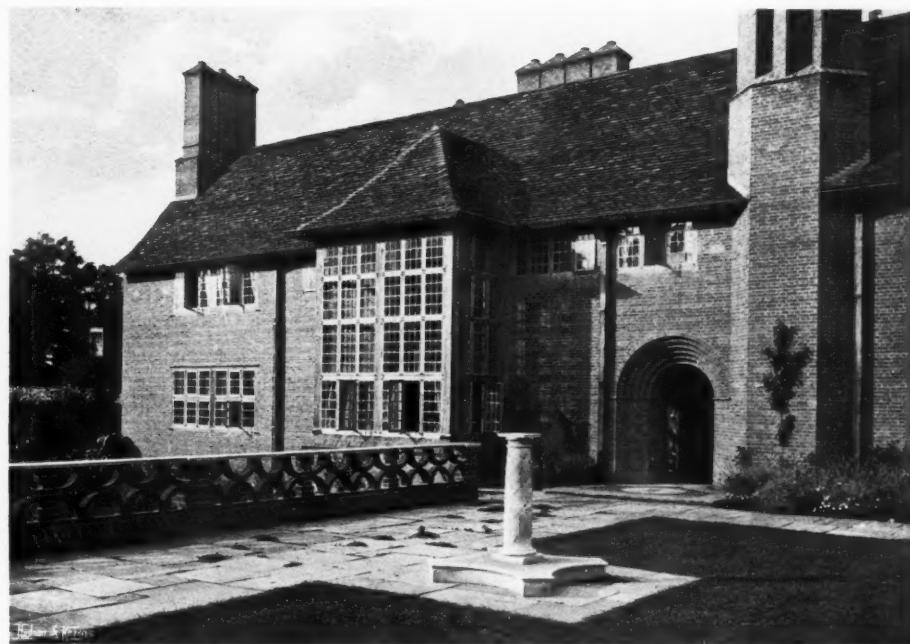
"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE CANAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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ON THE UPPER TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

There is a fragrant lavender walk, and from spring to autumn the herbaceous borders, which are of ample proportion and are no mere strips, are glorious with the gay colours of their grand floral colonies. Here are delphiniums, lovely poppies, and more things than can here be enumerated. There are low-growing foliage plants and taller flowers behind, and the whole effect of colour at the changing seasons is superb. The grouping is bold, and the beds are planned with foresight, so that at no season are they destitute of the charm of colour. Nor is fragrance

forgotten, for everywhere there are grateful odours such as should never be wanting in well-cultivated gardens.

We may now descend to a lower level, and the descents are truly beautiful, and are floral also. Segmental steps leading down are met by others with an opposing curve—convex to convex, or concave to concave, with a most pleasing and attractive effect ;

their stonework is rough, as has been said, and in many places hermit flowers may be discovered rooted in congenial crevices. It is as if Flora herself had traversed this region of enchantment and sown it with her fairest flowers. Saxifrages, campanulas, pinks, and many other beautiful things are in the retaining wall.

We have now reached the orchard, and, leaving behind us the flower borders, the walls, the terraced walks, and the pergola, we pass down through the grass walks among the trees. Now in this part of the garden

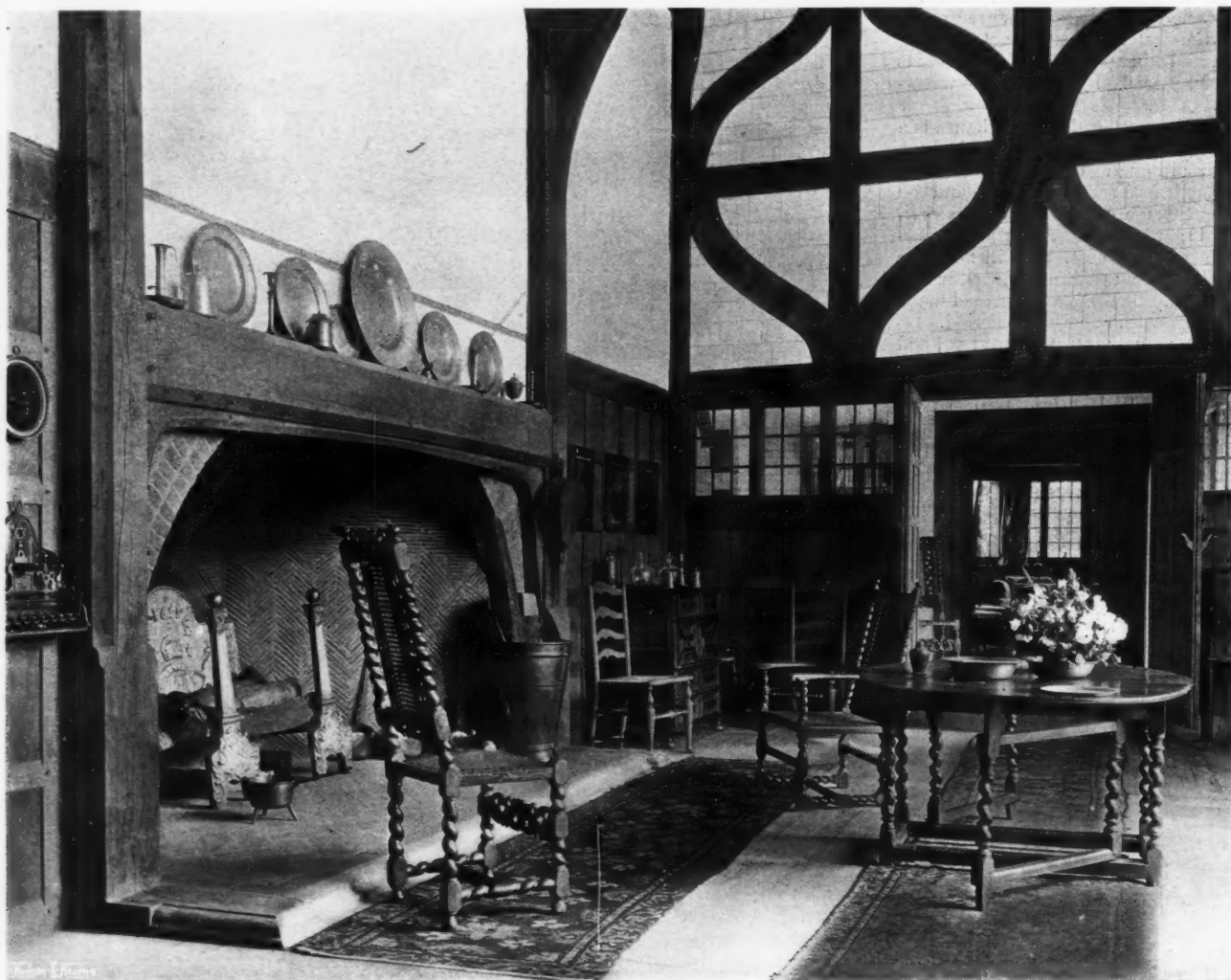
fine natural effects are attained, especially in the spring. Daffodils in much variety—Emperor, Empress, Sir Watkin, Horsfieldi, and many other kinds—are grown in the grass, in drifts through the wood, just as Nature grows their originals in the natural woodland, and there is a perfect scheme of colour, passing from the deep yellow to the pale lemon. With



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"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE HALL FROM THE ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the nodding daffodils, each in its season, flourish multitudes of other bulbous plants, possessing in this sweet place greater charm than ever they could possess in mere clumps or lines. They light up the grass in the shadows of the trees. Mr. Lutyens never designed a more perfect house or a more charming garden.

FENCING.

THE very name breathes magic. Time's barriers seem to fade away, and I walk in the yesterday of history. By my side are men in bright-hued cloaks, plumed hats, and ruffs at neck and wrist. All are alert and watchful, and stern faces scan the sea with fierce intent.

"Not a sail in sight!" Ah, 'twas an idle boast. The

cursed Spaniard will not dare attack us. Nay! but should he come with twice his boasted strength, stout English hearts will beat him back and prove that *we*, not he, are invincible.

We light long pipes and watch the blue smoke filter through the haze. What a debt we owe to Sir Walter, I think, as I take long puffs from mine.

One of my companions is telling the story of a duel he fought with a Spanish nobleman in Mexico. We form a ring round him and listen. He throws back his head; his eyes flash.

"Don Miguel was one of the finest swordsmen of Spain," he is saying. "He used to boast about it; but for all his vaunted skill, a good English blade was too much for him. Well I remember it . . . how his lip curled with scorn as he prepared to fight with me. His thrusts were swift and subtle, but I turned them aside, and then, at last! It was like this!" he cries, rising to his feet and waving his arm aloft, "like this! in

good old English style," and he brings down his sword with a slash that would have felled Goliath. "I remember the fight by this," he says, parting his ruff to show a deep scar on his neck.

"And Don Miguel?" we all cry.

"Don Miguel remembers nothing. He sleeps with his forefathers."

A burst of laughing applause follows.

"Aye! but they make fine sport for us, these Spaniards," says a voice at my elbow. "Look at this!" and he holds up a bracelet of curiously wrought gold, set with precious stones. "I have numbers more at home. 'Twere ill luck indeed if, with so many Spanish treasure-ships afloat, an honest Englishman could not take his choice of ornaments."

"Let us drink," says another. "Drink to our first meeting with Philip's ships. Here's luck to you all and death to the enemy." We raise our glasses, but before they reach our lips a cry comes from the shore: "To arms! to arms! The Spaniard! the Spaniard!"

We rush down to the sea, and there, sure enough, faintly discernible on the horizon, is a long line of battle-ships, extending to right and left of us in crescent form. I strain my eyes to follow their movements. I lose myself in looking. When I turn round my companions have all disappeared.

Once more my fancy wanders. This time my companions are men in the picturesque garb of early Stuart days, wearing richly-laced cloaks and silken doublets. Their flowing lovelocks are half hidden beneath broad-leaved beaver hats. At their sides hang rapiers, clashing now against a chance stone, now against the gilt spurs of their owners. We offer each other scented snuff as we make our way through the narrow London streets towards a coffee-house hard by. We are young and full of life, and the hand is ever near the sword-hilt. Jestings is rife, and sad-faced Puritans and sleepy watchmen in their boxes are in turn the butt of our merriment. An acquaintance—more sober than we—asks if we will come with him to hear John Dryden talk. Will we? What think you? Was life given to us to waste on that fashion? Odd's fish! We can better employ *our* time! When we are as old as he, we too will go and hear poets talk, but now we have different work on hand.

We drink each other's health in rich claret, and fall to discussing the fight which is to take place later in the evening between Sir Ralph Falconer and the Comte de la Tour. None know the cause of the quarrel, but all are eager to proclaim it to the rest of the company. "They disagreed upon a point of religion," says one. "It is a lady they are fighting for!" declares a second. "On my life, you are both wrong!" affirms a third. "It is not a personal quarrel at all. They fight simply to see which are the better swordsmen—the English or the French. It is to take place in the field on the north side of the Abbey at Westminster. They meet soon after seven, and when eight o'clock rings it is the signal to stop!"

"What matter the cause? Anyhow, 'twill be a brave fight!" I cry, filling up the glasses. "Gentlemen! Here's to the Englishman!" All glasses are raised, and amid long and deafening cheers Sir Ralph's health is pledged.

It is scarce seven o'clock when we appear at the Abbey field. The combatants have not yet arrived, but the place is

thronged by a motley crowd who have gathered to see the fight. Here a knot of young gallants, taking snuff together and laying odds on the winner, there an old beau, recounting adventures of younger days to an admiring crowd around him. Here an old soldier, there a sporting parson.

Suddenly silence falls, for the principals have arrived on the field, and their seconds are busy examining the ground and marking off the distance. Sir Ralph is tall and lithe, and a look of quiet determination sits on his brow. His muscles are well knit, and he moves freely. "His the longer reach," I murmur to myself, "and his the staying power." Then I look at the Comte de la Tour. What he loses in height he will make up in quickness, if I mistake not. His whole being speaks agility; his eye pronounces him ever alert.

The seconds have satisfied themselves as to the ground; the crowd holds its breath; the principals are "on guard." They fix each other with their eyes. Who will be the first to attack?

Suddenly the Frenchman's blade flames forth like a lightning flash, to be deftly turned aside by Sir Ralph, whose answering attack is, in its turn, quickly parried by the Comte.

"On guard!" again. The same suspense—the same intensity of watching. This time it is the Englishman who attacks first. Taking advantage of a momentary absence of his opponent's sword, he lifts his arm aloft and cuts downward with a heavy blow. But the Comte de la Tour is waiting for him, and, before he can recover or retreat, the answering thrust has been given, and Sir Ralph's shirt is stained with blood on the side nearest the sword-arm. "'Twere ill luck for you had the blade done more than graze," I murmur. "Leave your cutting alone, Sir Ralph, and trust to the point."

Once more they cross swords, each, by feints and rapid changes of engagement, trying to force the other's hand. At last the Frenchman comes forward with another lightning thrust, but Sir Ralph is ready this time, and quickly finding his opponent's blade, uses it as a conductor to bring his own point home. "Touché!" declares Monsieur le Comte, and, bowing, steps aside to have his wound roughly bandaged.

We wait anxiously to see if his hurt will allow him to continue the play, but our fears are groundless, for in a few moments back comes the gallant

Frenchman, amid the cheers of the company. "Bravo!" we cry, as we steady ourselves to watch the end of the conflict.

One hit each, and the light slowly fading! Truly, was there ever such an exciting moment?

The fight is renewed, and then, just as the Comte is in the act of delivering another of his subtle thrusts, like the boom of a cannon comes the first stroke of eight.

The sound brings me back to earth. True, the Abbey clock has just struck the hour, but where—where is the gay company in the field—the old beaux, the young gallants? Where is Sir Ralph Falconer and where the Comte de la Tour?

Gone—all gone—along with my own gay trappings, my plumed hat, my jewelled sword, and in their place a modern school of arms in Westminster; last year's amateur champion fencing with a French professor, and myself—sitting dreaming among them—awaiting my turn.

M. E. F.



Richard N. Speaight,

178, Regent Street.

THE DUCHESS OF WESTMINSTER AND HER DAUGHTER.

THE SPRING FIELD TRIALS.



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WATCHING A TRIAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

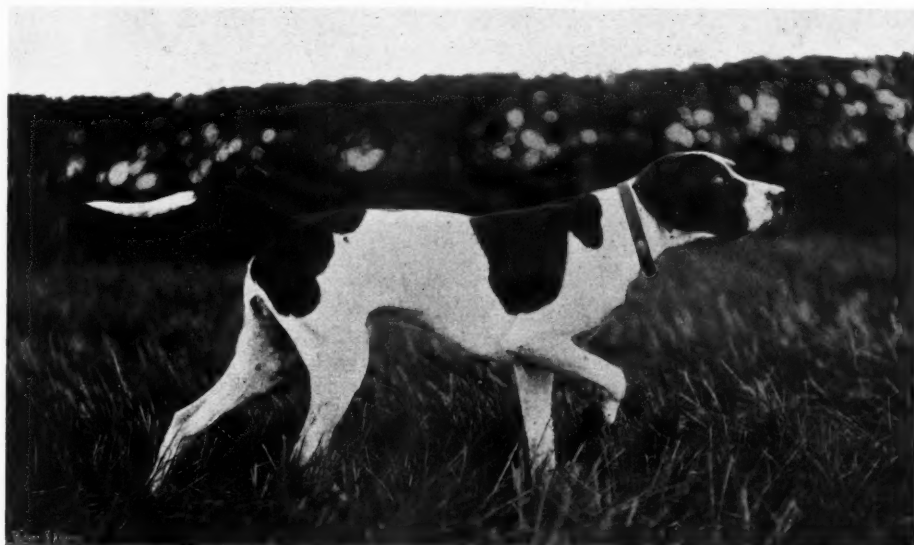
IF, as we are so often told, it were true that shooting over dogs is dying out, it would be the strangest of coincidences that the institutions for the trial of pointers and setters upon game not only grow in number, but are patronised by more people, who enter more dogs than formerly. At several of the meetings the large entry give to a couple of hard-walking judges all the work they can do to get through the lengthy card in three days from 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. The fact is, that dogs have never gone out in any noteworthy degree in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for the best of all good reasons. In many districts it is impossible to shoot grouse without their assistance, and although at one time it was thought that driving grouse in the Highlands would

become general, it has only done so in a few counties, and there only as an aftermath to the shooting over dogs.

The spring series of Field Trials has just come to an end by

the conclusion of the annual National Meeting, which has this season been held, as most frequently during its thirty-five or thirty-six years of existence, near to Shrewsbury, and upon the estates of Acton Reynald, which two generations of the Corbets have lent, and by their liberality made classic ground to shooters.

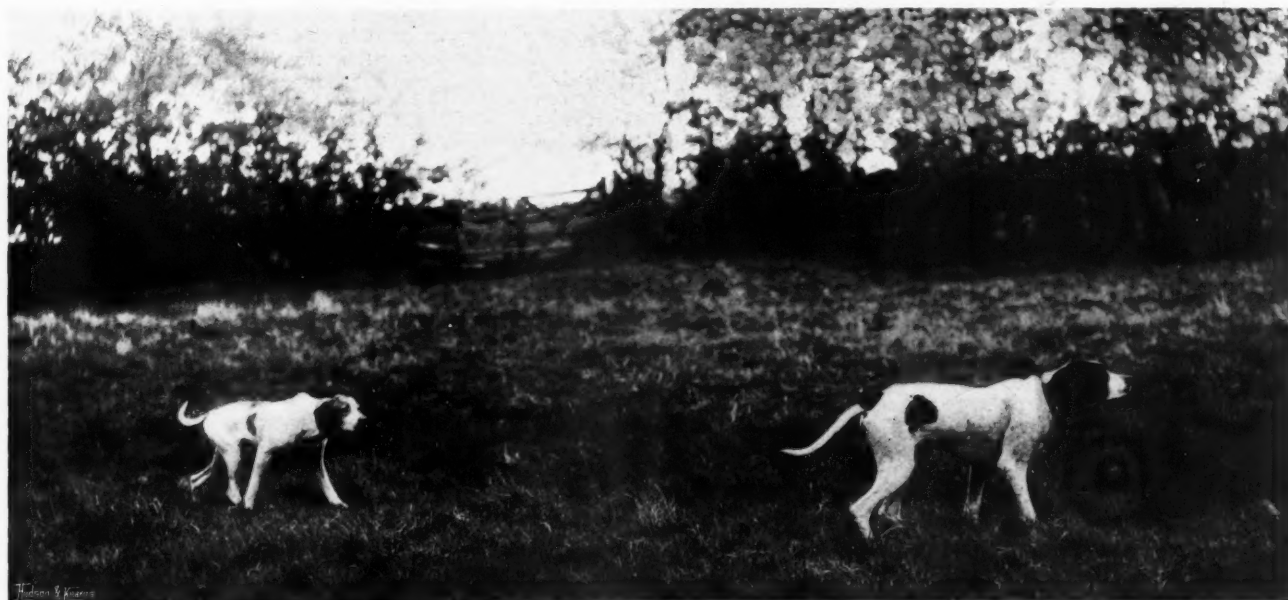
The first trial of the series is that of the International Gun-Dog League; it is a one-stake and one-day meeting, which this season resulted in none of the admirable brace work it was designed to foster. This is generally held upon Captain Pretymann's Orwell Park estate,



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MR. R. C. MAWSOM'S WAGG OF BROMFIELD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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MR. E. BISHOP'S BANG PEDRO AND MASTER PEDRO POINTING AND BACKING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and is followed now annually by the Kennel Club meeting—the only one of the series that perceptibly grows smaller. The Kennel Club Derby was at one period a stake with 140 or so of entries, and between thirty and forty runners. It was also regarded as the annual test of the best of the young dogs. Now it is not the largest nor the best, but this year it brought out a quite remarkable little blue-belton setter in Mr. B. J. Warwick's Compton Bounce. This puppy has what used to be called a great deal of "game-finding tact," or, in other words, powers of detecting and understanding the meaning of scent such as are quite unusual even in the best-bred pointers and setters. When I say "the meaning of scent," I refer to the faculty that some few exceptional dogs have of detecting by the foot scent, as well as by the body scent, what the game is doing at the moment—not merely that it is moving in a certain direction, but how far it has got, and what sort of a cast will enable it to be exactly localised. The only other setter puppy that has at either meeting been able to get a fair look at the prize-money has been Colonel Cotes's Pitchford Dash, bred by his handsome setter Dodger. Dash took second at Acton Reynald, but Bounce was for the third successive occasion first, and it would be a mistake to say that there was any luck about this placing. The absolute winner over both young pointers and setters at both the Kennel and the English Setter Clubs' meetings, Bounce suffered defeat by the winner of the Pointer Puppy Stake at Shrewsbury. This Acton Reynald victor was Mr. R. C. Mawson's Wagg of Bromfield, a pointer of fine proportions, but one that to beat Bounce required, and had, an enormous quantity of luck. But this Wagg is likely to make a good dog some day, for he is big and growing, and only twelve months old. The



Copyright MR. HERBERT MITCHELL'S LINGFIELD KATE. "COUNTRY LIFE."

best pointer puppy seen out for the season was even younger. This was the victor of the pointer half of the Kennel Club

Derby. He is a ten months' old puppy named Hutton Rocket, belonging to Mr. Baxter. The winning pointer puppy at the English Setter Club meeting is admirably broken, as so many of Mr. James Bishop's are, but he is hardly a dog that may be expected to win stakes for the aged another year.

The trials of the old dogs began at the Kennel Club meeting, where the judges made a most unfortunate choice in giving Compton Pride first and Compton Sam second, both dogs belonging to Mr. B. J. Warwick. Sam was really smothered in his trial with Mr. Herbert Mitchell's Lingfield Dru, and Pride

was equally outclassed by Mr. Worthington's Fishguard Shot—both placed behind the two former. Pride, the winning pointer, is a most uncertain animal; in the English Setter Club Trials she did not get into the money, which was won by Mr. F. C. Lowe's Bishop of Bobbing—a rather slow dog. The chaff about Pride's previous position at the Kennel Club led afterwards to a match between the two last named, and this the Bishop won also. Nevertheless, at Acton Reynald Pride came out top in the Champion Stakes; this she deservedly won if it be granted that she should ever have been allowed into the second round of the card. Probably the judges had their backs to the five brace of partridges that she and Mr. Murgatroyd's Rumney Rena left in their first field; but they doubtless did see Pride refuse to back, which is a grave fault for a champion. Nevertheless, having admitted her into the second round, she ran one very smart trial before being put down with Major Heywood-Lonsdale's Ightfield Duke, the runner up. Then occurred as good work as any seen during the spring meetings. Both dogs are fast, and both quarter their ground admirably. Duke finds his game a long distance off, and Pride near to her. The former's ambition proved his downfall, for he took his casts a few yards further apart than



Copyright MR. B. J. WARWICK'S COMPTON'S PRIDE. "C.L."



Copyright A DOUBLE POINT—RUMNEY RUTH AND RUMNEY RENA. "C.L."

his nose (on the day) could command, and although he always had the outside cast, he missed some birds, and Pride found them. It is easy to see that Duke has been hunted with another dog as good as himself, and one with which the width of cast he was taking would be safe, for the reason that his brace companion would cover an equal proportion of the ground, which was not the case either with the champion, Pride, or any other dog that Duke ran with during the trials, except another brace companion, Ightfield Bang. The latter, however, was rather too wild for brace work at Acton Reynald, and there, as well as at the English Setter Club Trials, Mr. Elias Bishop came to the front in the Stakes for braces—in both cases by means of Master Pedro and Bang Pedro, two good dogs, well matched, and careful quarterers.

It generally happens that the best work at these meetings is done in one or other of the stakes for braces of dogs belonging to the same owner; but this was not so this year. Probably the best trial of the whole of the meetings was the

final of the Setter Puppy Stake at Acton Reynald, where Compton Bounce and Colonel Cotes's Pitchford Dash hunted with that vim and pointed and backed with that unhesitating decision which proclaims the fact that the most intense critic it is possible to conceive is satisfied.

The Acton Reynald Stakes brought to the front Mr. Herbert Mitchell's setter Lingfield Kate and Mr. Murgatroyd's pointer Rumney Ruth; in the trial between them for absolute best (in a stake for non-winners), Kate was favourite, but after doing splendidly, ran wilfully wild and defeated herself, as she was bound to do if Ruth was to win, and she did. The latter false points too frequently, but has, nevertheless, won often during this spring. Mr. Purcell Llewellyn's Count Gleam was second in this stake, and had previously run a very satisfactory trial with Lingfield Kate, as had an Irish setter belonging to Mr. Cheetham. Gleam, just mentioned, and Border Brenda, from the same kennel, show beautiful method and fine form in pointing and backing.

G. T. TEASDALE-BUCKELL.

THE OLD-ENGLISH MAY DAY.

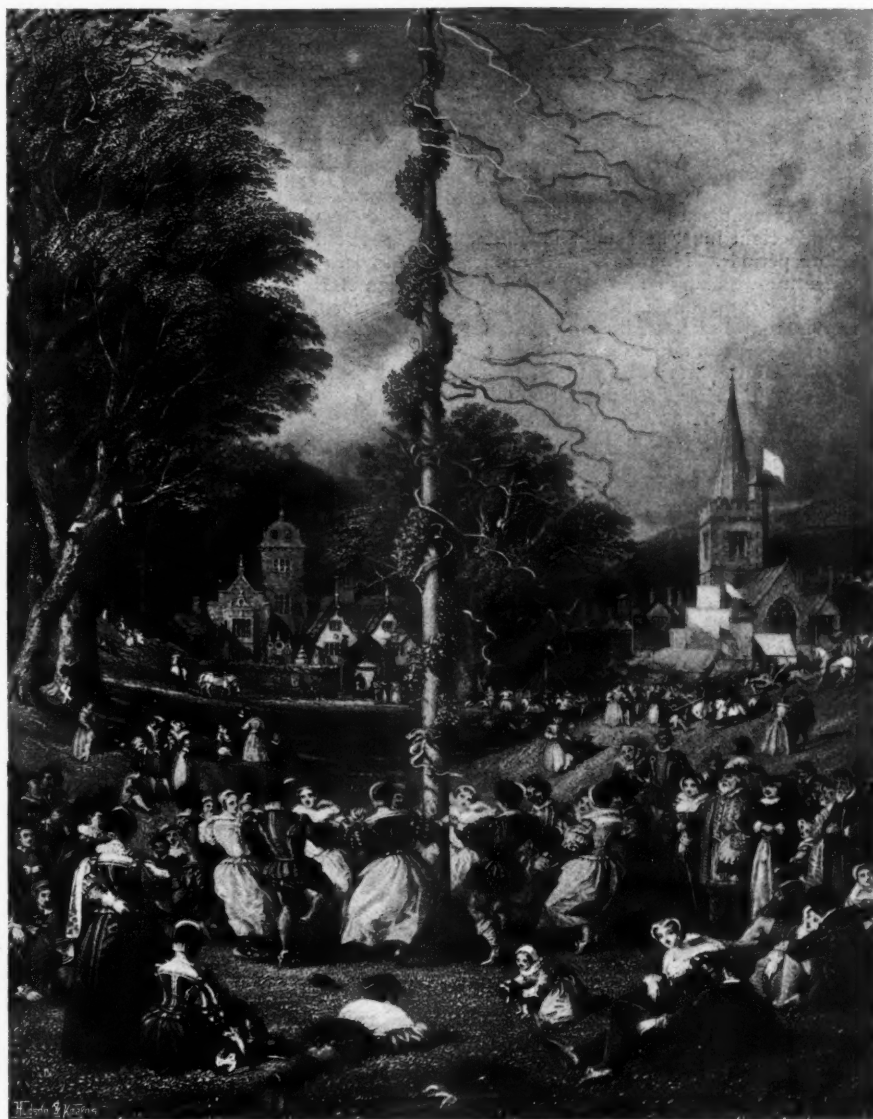
Of the many varied and picturesque customs that have, alas! been killed by the push and drive of modern times, none were more replete with true poetic feeling than those so long associated with the Old-English May Day. Poets have ever delighted to sing their glories of those simple, healthsome gaieties with which our forefathers did honour to "Flowery May." It is true that in recent years the month has sadly belied its old character, but tradition dies hard; so we are still accustomed to look upon it as one of the most charming in the calendar, when the hawthorn-scented air is filled with the music of the feathered songsters, the sky radiant with sunny smiles, and the fields gay with myriads of sweet, fragrant flowers—until, as Thomson says, the whole country-side is

"One boundless blush,
one white empurpled
shower, of mingled
blossoms."

On May Day, long ere the sun had tinged with his golden beams the eastern horizon, the tuneful church bells of town and village were in the olden time

"Still wont to usher in delightful May,
The dewy silence of the morning hour
Cheering with many and changeful roundelay,"

warning the maidens that it was high time to steal away into the gem-bespangled fields to wash their faces with the early "May-dew," which was looked upon as a golden specific to make them beautiful; or, perhaps, thinking of the object of her affections, the blushing damsel gathered it as a potent charm of love with



THE MAYPOLE.

(By C. Couser, after J. Nash)

the happy thought
that

"Its pearls are more
precious than
those they find

In jewell'd India's
sea,

For the dew-drops'
love might serve
to bind

Thy heart for ever to
me."—LOVER.

Soon after midnight the lads and lasses met, and with merry songs thronged out into the woods and meadows "to bring home the May," waking the birds with their shouts and laughter. If their village or town did not already possess a Maypole—for in many places it was left standing year after year—the men would busy themselves cutting and trimming one, the younger members of the joyous band meanwhile being hard at work gathering branches of the fragrant "May" and other trees and loading themselves with the sweet wild flowers. With songs, music, and great rejoicing the Maypole was escorted home by the merry-hearted crowd, when their floral burden was used to decorate windows and doors, while the pole, having been made

gay with garlands of flowers and streamers of ribbons, was set up on the village green, or on some other open space, amid much enthusiasm. Then came the crowning of the fairest maid as "Queen of the May," and "From morn to noon, from noon to dewy-eve," dancing, mirth, and general festivity took place around it; and, when the sun sank to rest, the fun and merriment were continued by the light of the huge bonfires.

In olden times it was customary for all ranks of society thus to go "a-maying." In Chaucer's "Court of Love" we read that on May Day "fourth goth al the Court, both most and lest, to fetch the flouris fresh, and braunch, and blome." And

Malory, with quaintly uncertain orthography, tells us in "Le Morte d'Arthur" how the fair Queen Guenever and "her knyghtes of the table round" rode "mayeng in to woodes & felde besyde Westmynstre." Bluff King Hal, too, on one occasion at least, went a-maying with Queen Catherine of Aragon; and in Leslie's magnificent picture Good Queen Bess is a conspicuous figure.

The festival of May Day has existed in this country from the earliest period, though from time to time its form has changed. Tollet was of opinion that it originally came from our Gothic ancestors. Others, again, have sought for the origin in the "Floralia," or rather in the "Miuma," of the Romans; but, though at first sight this conjecture appears feasible, there can be little question that the final origin must be sought in other countries, and far more remote periods. Maurice looked upon the festival as a relic of the Nature-worship of the East; and it would seem that the festival has come down to us from the Druids, who themselves had it from India. This is borne out by several striking facts and coincidences, and especially by the vestiges of the god Bel or Baal. On the first of May the Druids celebrated his worship by lighting immense fires upon the hill-tops; hence the day was known to our aboriginal Irish, and Scotch Highlanders—both of the Celtic stock—as "la Beltine," the day of "Belen's fire." In a modified form the ancient observances were carried out in both countries up till comparatively recent times. A victim, drawn by lot, was sacrificed to the god, by being compelled to leap three times through the flames, as an



THE MILKMAIDS' GARLAND.

offering to implore his favour in rendering the year productive of sustenance for man and beast.

When Christianity found its way into Britain, the same mode was no doubt adopted by the first missionaries with regard to the May games as with other festivals. Instead of seeking violently to wrench the people from practices to which by long usage they had become almost inseparably wedded, they sought rather to divert the popular festivals

from the worship of Pagan deities, by investing them with other characters. Thus, no doubt, in process of time, the May Day festival was changed from its original intention, the meaning of its various symbols forgotten, and ultimately drifted into the holiday so long continued by our ancestors.

From time to time various amusements, popular at different periods, were added to these remains of Pagan times. In the reign of Henry VIII. archery again came into prominence, and henceforth Robin Hood and pretty Maid Marian figured as Lord



WEAVING THE MAY CORONET.

(By T. Langer, after L. Pohle.)



JACK-IN-THE-GREEN.

and Lady of the May. Then there was the Morris or "Morisco" dance, supposed to have been brought to England about the year 1332 by John of Gaunt. Centuries later we find the milkmaids figuring prominently in the May Day observances. A still more remarkable addition to the ancient stock were the chimney-sweeps, who, in the guise of Jack-in-the-Green and his various attendants, may still occasionally be met with. An interesting family likeness will be noticed between the illustration of these well-known characters and a group from the Roman Carnival, as shown in an old German print dated 1789, which we also reproduce.

Among a host of curious local customs associated with the Old-English May Day, mention may be made of one observed

by the young people of Burnley and the surrounding district. The evening before May Day was known as "Mischief Night," and was recognised as a period of practical joking. A favourite amusement was to interchange the signboards of the various tradesmen. Thus "John Smith, Grocer," would find his name and vocation changed to "Thomas Jones, Tailor," and *vice versa*. Long after the authorities had put a stop to these practices the young men and women continued to amuse themselves by placing branches of trees, shrubs, or flowers under each other's windows or doors. The floral offering had a symbolical meaning—a sort of "Language of Flowers"—a thorn implying "scorn," the mountain ash "my dear chicken," while a bramble would be left for one who had a fondness for roaming about. A similar custom prevailed at Hitchin, where an offer of a piece of May was looked upon as a compliment, while a branch of elder with a bunch of nettles indicated deep disgrace.

A pretty custom used to exist in the Isle of Man. On the eve of May Day the children would gather primroses and strew them before the doors of their dwellings to prevent the entrance of the fairies, for on this night these aerial folk, together with their relatives the witches, were supposed to be abroad in greater numbers than usual. Parties of adults used also to congregate on the mountains, setting fire to the gorse and blowing horns in order to scare these immortals away. Many would remain on the hills until sunrise, seeking to pry into futurity by observing particular omens. If a bright light was observed to issue from



MASQUERADERS AT A ROMAN CARNIVAL.

(From an old German print, 1789.)

any house in the surrounding neighbourhood, it was looked upon as a certain omen that some member of the family would soon be married, while a dim light seen moving slowly in the direction of the parish church was considered to indicate that ere long a funeral would pass that way.

In Cornwall the first of May was hailed by the juveniles as "dipping-day." Armed with a bucket, can, syringe, or any such instrument, they paraded the streets and "dipped"—that is, drenched—all people who had not the protection of a piece of May in their hats or buttonholes, though a few coppers would generally buy off the penalty. Padstow had a local variation of the practice, called the "Hobby-horse," from the figure of a horse being carried through the street. The whole population formed its escort to a place called Traitor Pool, at which the hobby-horse was always supposed to drink. The head, dipped in the water, was quickly withdrawn, and the mud and water scattered round

on the spectators, to the no small diversion of all concerned. Re-forming, the procession marched back to the village singing a song which recounted the supposed origin of the custom. The tradition was that once upon a time—presumably on May Day—the French, who had effected a landing at a small cove in the vicinity, were scared away by seeing in the distance a number of women dressed in red. Mistaking them for soldiers, the foreigners fled to their ships, and promptly put to sea.

A very curious custom used to be observed at Randwick, in



MAY DAY IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

(By Watt, after Leslie.)

Gloucestershire, on May morning. At daybreak, three cheeses, gaily festooned and garlanded with flowers, were carried on a litter to the churchyard and mystically rolled three times round the sacred edifice. Afterwards, replaced on the litter, they were carried back in triumphal procession to the village green, and cut up and distributed among the crowd.

As we have not yet given a specimen of the many and varied May-songs which in different parts of the country formed an important item in the day's proceedings, we will conclude with a verse of one sung by the children of this country as they footed it merrily round the Maypole:

"Round the Maypole, trit-trit-trot!
See what a Maypole we have got;
Fine and gay,
Trip away,
Happy is our new May Day."

A. W. JARVIS.

A BOOK OF THE DAY.

TWENTY years have elapsed since the publication of Froude's biography of Carlyle, and during that period it has been more or less a subject of controversy. The "Sage of Chelsea," as it was the custom to call him while he still remained in "the warm precincts of the cheerful day," was at his death, and remains now, one of the most interesting characters in literary history, and the very

the philosopher as hard, cross-grained, callous, and selfish, but he had made too much of what may be called the "Ashburton episode." Thus:

"Society came to think that the Apostle of Hero-Worship had engaged in a discreditable intrigue, and utterly false and demeaning notions as to the relations of Carlyle and his wife got into currency, and for these, when disputed, Froude was invariably quoted as an authority. When in Society at this hour one presses for an explanation of the dislike of Carlyle that is often freely expressed by worthy women who know nothing of him or his works, the answer invariably is that Mr. Froude proved him to be a bad man, who was cruel to his wife, and compelled her to go in an omnibus while he was himself riding an expensive horse."

We do not quote this passage in order to endorse it. That Society, with a capital S, ever made or marred the reputation of a man of letters is incredible, and the "worthy women" who remark at dinner that Carlyle was a brute to his wife, probably never would have heard his name if it had not been for this pleasing feature in his career. Nor do we think Sir James Crichton Browne at all correct in his diagnosis of the rise and fall of Carlyle's reputation. Mr. Balfour hit the mark much nearer the bull's-eye when he said that Carlyle had addressed two generations. Those two generations needed him, and to them he was a very potent voice, but whether that voice be destined to be heard down the ages has become extremely doubtful. That Carlyle was not so far-seeing as the people of his time believed, or that his habit of exaggeration carried him completely off his feet, is very evident to anyone who takes the trouble to compare the prophesies in the "Latter-Day Pamphlets" with the actual



RAISING THE MAYPOLE.

(After F. Goodall.)

eminence to which he had attained lent additional force to the blistering phrases showered upon the living and upon the dead by the outspoken old man. But certain obvious defects of the book probably blinded many of those to whom it was addressed to its great and genuine merits. In strictly literary circles the biography was condemned, but then for literary circles Carlyle, during the whole of his life, had felt and expressed the most emphatic contempt. Outside the coteries and tea-parties of men of letters the book was held in a very different estimation, because the general reader was not touched personally by Carlyle's frankness. Naturally, therefore, writing men, having the expression of opinion in their power, although they had not its making, gave the dominant note to criticism, and managed to bring the book into undeserved disrepute. Although its first edition was marred by Froude's inveterate carelessness, it presents the character of Carlyle almost as successfully as Boswell's famous work did that of Dr. Johnson, and neither in real life nor in fiction was there ever an individuality more worth painting. Sir James Crichton Browne, in his introduction to the volumes now before us, *The New Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle* (John Lane), attributes "the collapse in the public estimation" of Carlyle to the impression created by his biographer. Not only, to speak from his point of view, had Froude painted

events that followed them. That is to say, when he looked far ahead he had not the insight that has been displayed by men of smaller pretensions. But, on the other hand, whoever will turn to that famous passage in "Past and Present" which describes the England of his time as enchanted, will find him at his best:

"Twelve hundred thousand workers in England alone; their cunning right hand lamed, lying idle in their sorrowful bosom, their hopes, outlooks, share of this fair world, shut in by narrow walls. They sit there, pent up as in a kind of horrid enchantment."

It was the clarion voice of Carlyle that roused the country from the apathy of that time, and this is but one example of the splendid and stimulating influence which he exercised over his contemporaries.

During his lifetime the only thing that he disdained about Goethe was the art of the latter, yet it was that art that was destined to carry the great German's name down to posterity. Not all the sulphurous phrases of Carlyle, wide as the attention they created was when they came hurtling forth from him, have produced the enduring impression made by some of the soft and silken lines of Tennyson. His friendship with the great poet did not prevent him describing much of the verse as literary confectionery; but consider how these poems of Tennyson still exercise as vital an influence as they did when written, while few

indeed of our youths and maidens could pass an elementary examination even in the "French Revolution," to say nothing of such recondite works as the "Frederick," and the "Cromwell."

However, Sir James Crichton Browne appears to be less concerned about Carlyle's literary than about his domestic reputation. In one way he scores very heavily, because Anthony Froude did not adequately realise the love story of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Baillie Welsh. Both the hero and heroine had passed through the furnace of love before; even Teufelsdröckh's experience had included the Blumine incident. There can be little doubt that Miss Welsh ought to have been the bride of Edward Irving. Long afterwards, as many will remember, she remarked that there would have been no "tongues" if "Irving had married me," and the under-current of melancholy in that great preacher's life probably had its origin in his loss of Miss Welsh. It was an entirely false sense of honour that constrained him to abide by his engagement, which was only a half engagement after all, to Miss Martin, and sacrifice his passion for Miss Welsh. If Irving and she had been married the union would probably have been one of those few, but perfect, matches which caused the proverb to arise that marriages are made in Heaven. As things turned out, her union with Carlyle was essentially common-place, in spite of all her wit and beauty and the eminence of her husband, common-place because it was a compromise. She admired his genius, and he thought that Georges Sand and George Eliot were not as witty and clever as she, and perhaps in ordinary life such an arrangement might do passing well, at least, it is far from unusual, but it did not satisfy two such restless human hearts as those of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welsh, and the scenes described by Froude were the natural result of the marriage.

Sir James Crichton Browne, in his endeavour to restore Carlyle to the position he once held, makes out as bad a case as possible against his wife, but this process was quite unnecessary. To men of sense Carlyle remained the same after Froude's biography that he had been before, except for this, that they had become more intimate with him. There are hundreds of little incidents told in his life, which show him to have been a man of the very kindest heart, with an unending fondness for all who were connected with him. His love for his mother and for his father, and the care which he devoted to his wife, in spite of the little explosions of temper that occurred between them, all point to the same fineness of temperament, but he was dyspeptic and was hasty, and accustomed to a very free use of superlatives, so that mountains were always being made out of molehills in Cheyne Row.

The controversial part of the volumes we are reviewing consists of the essay of Sir James Crichton Browne. The letters themselves tell us very little that is new, Froude, as a matter of fact, having gathered the cream of them for the biography. We seem to think rather less of Mrs. Carlyle's cleverness when presented in two bulky volumes than when exhibited in a chance phrase or speech. She was the daughter of a country doctor in Haddington, and something of the provinciality that goes with cleverness in such circumstances clung to her all her life. She was quick, witty, smart, and had even a certain fine feeling for poetry and other literature, but to have been great she wanted more breadth of view, and a somewhat wider philosophy. The letters must have been extremely pleasant and interesting reading to the circles in which, no doubt, they were handed about, but for our own part we find it somewhat difficult at this time of day to wade through two big volumes of them, even though they are enlivened by the casual notes of "Doubting Thomas." P. A. G.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IVY POISONING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

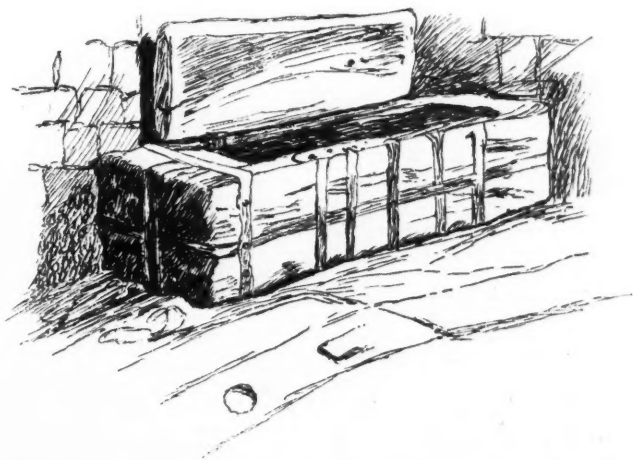
SIR,—I have read the article on *Rhus toxicodendron* (poison ivy) in *COUNTRY LIFE* of April 18th, and should be so grateful if you could get your correspondent to send me a small piece of the plant. I am a martyr to some poisoning or other from my garden. We entered our present residence on May 1st, 1901. I had only been there three weeks when I was laid up with exactly, in every detail, the symptoms described in the article in my face and right hand and arm. My doctor from Liverpool was sent for, who pronounced it to be erysipelas. I was in bed three weeks, and then went from home for six, and had no repetition of it until the next April, when I was seized again exactly in the same way. My face was swollen beyond recognition, and it was impossible even for me to speak; both eyes were completely closed for more than a week. The local doctor then attended me, and he was certain it was suppressed gout. However, after another three weeks in bed, I went straight to Liverpool to consult a specialist on skin disease—Mr. Leslie Roberts. He said it was nerves; but after two days I had the worst attack I have ever had, and no sooner did I get better and go downstairs than I was bad again, until I had five attacks and three months in all in my bedroom. Driven to desperation, I went to London whilst I was suffering and consulted Mr. Malcolm Morris of Harley Street, who immediately asserted it to be ivy poisoning, which I had never heard of, and the only ivy which I can think I touch is the one growing on the banks amongst the primroses, as I am continually plucking the latter. This year I made up my mind to leave all flowers entirely alone, which I have done, but still, three weeks ago I was laid up again with the same thing, and as

soon as I could travel came away, as it leaves me directly I leave home and my face heals up at once, although of course I feel weak and run down. The agony and irritation of it is awful to bear. My husband a few days ago sent for the botanist of the Liverpool University to go through the garden, but he can find nothing to cause my trouble, and only mentions *Primula obconica*, which I never touch or have in the conservatory. On thinking the matter over, I have remembered a small creeper in an obscure corner, which turns quite red in the autumn, but what I thought was a Virginia creeper, although much smaller in the leaf than the ordinary one, and which the front of the house is covered with. For harvest decorations I pull quantities of the former one, but never suffer in the autumn, and only during April and May. I had only returned from Madeira this year a week or two when I was taken ill. So it must be in the garden or lanes about us that something affects me. I must apologise for troubling you at such length, but I am so anxious to find, if possible, the cause of my trouble. It comes upon me quite suddenly. I feel an irritation of the eyelids, and in a few hours my eyes and face are in an awful state.—NEATA LUND.

ANOTHER OLD CHEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Herewith is the sketch of an interesting old muniment chest from a drawing by Mr. Gordon Home, which evidently was hollowed from a solid



block of wood and bound with iron. Its primitive character shows it to be of a very early period. It is in the parish church of Brushford, West Somerset.—C. W. NELDER.

MAY-DAY CUSTOMS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The May Day custom of school children carrying wreaths and singing at the gentlefolk's doors is not so extinct as your contributor "L. Salmon" seems to think. I could name several Surrey villages where this custom has survived in unbroken continuity, and shows no sign of dying out. The children tie their bunches of flowers (principally cowslips, marsh-marigolds, and bluebells) on a short staff, and call this a Maypole. The refrain sung is:

"Kind gentlemen and ladies,
We wish you a merry May;
We've come to show our Maypole
Because it is the day."

The custom is regularly kept up without any organisation whatever by adults. The children carry it out heartily and spontaneously, and this notwithstanding that London is sending its new-red villas over the hill line not many miles away. The observance of Oak Day (or Oak-apple Day) is no less regarded in the same villages on the 29th of the month. Woe betide the urchin who comes to school that day without the recognised oak-leaf emblem in his buttonhole or cap. He gets his toes well trodden on for his forgetfulness.—H. J. FOLEY.

CHERRY-GROWING IN ORCHARDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested recently in a description in your columns of cherry trees in Kent, but you gave no particulars about their cultivation. I have an orchard which I wish to plant with this fruit, and write to you in the hope that you will kindly give me some helpful advice.—M. E. T.

[The first point to consider is whether soil and situation are suitable. Success, as probably you are aware, depends upon these two matters, for the cherry will not grow anywhere, and does not differ in this respect from other fruits. The cherry, for example, in very moist ground fails utterly. Free drainage is therefore essential, and the crop must be saved from the birds by engaging a man or a boy to look after the orchard during the fruiting season. We hope your land is arable, as from our experience cherry trees are more successful in ground that has been under crop for a few years than when planted in freshly-broken soil; but this, of course, need not deter you from starting. Never let grass grow within 6ft. of the stems. Plant the standards 30ft. apart, support with strong stakes, and never let animals into the field, as the bark is easily injured. Give plenty of liquid manure to the trees in winter, and if your soil has little lime in it, dressings of this, old mortar rubble, or basic slag are advisable. As to pruning, the first consideration is the head of the tree, which must be strong and spreading. Once the foundation, so to say, has been laid, the less pruning the better. When the newly-planted trees have got established, shorten the shoots to promote strong growths which are to form the main branches, and then yearly trim the heads into shape. In October remove dead wood and thin out growths where overcrowded. The best varieties for orchards are the early-fruited Elton Heart, Early Amber, which is a favourite in east Kent, and is

very early, and the mid-season Kentish Bigarreau, also known as Amber Heart. Of late varieties choose the well-known Florence and Bigarreau Napoleon. Of black cherries there is a good selection. The old Black Heart is one of the best known of all cherries, and the Early Rivers' must not be forgotten. These are early varieties, and those later are Waterloo and Black Circassian. May Duke and Late Duke, which are well-known cherries, may also be included.—ED.]

THE YOUNG HARE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In that inimitable book for children, the "Struwelpeter," all will remember the amusing pictures and poetry of the green-coated man who went out to shoot the hare. The accompanying photograph represents a young hare in the nest, if such it can be called, for it was merely in a thick tussock of grass at the bottom of a fence, and the tiny creature was only two days old. As will be seen, it has a white star in the centre of the forehead. This is interesting, as it is the general belief in many parts of the country that this star only appears when there are two or more in the litter, and only on the bucks. Born with their eyes open—not blind like young rabbits—the leverets are very pretty little things. I have found them in February, and as late as the end of September when partridge shooting. Two are the usual number, occasionally three, and often, as in this case, only one. After the young leveret has been handled, the old hare almost invariably moves it away to another place of safety.—OXLEY GRABHAM.



Oxley Grabham—Copyright.

RIVAL RIVERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On reading the article contained in your issue of the 18th ult. about the Tweed, I noticed the following quotation:

"Tweed said to Till,
'What gars ye rin sae still?'
Till said to Tweed,
'Though ye rin wi' speed
And I rin slow,
Where ye droon yin man
I droon twa.'"

I have heard a version of this which, though meaning the same, reads differently, and may be of interest to some of your readers, viz.:

"Said Tweed to Till,
'What gars ye rin sae still?'
Said Till to Tweed,
'Though ye rin wi' speed,
For ilka man ye droon
I droon twa.'"—KALE WATER.

WHAT SIZED SHOT TO USE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent "Argus Olive's" most courteous criticism on the short article which I wrote in COUNTRY LIFE of April 11th, advocating the advantage of using 1oz. of No. 7 shot as a general charge throughout the season in preference to No. 5, for all but the "reserve cuvée" of shooters, in which he rightly states that No. 5 would, with the same charge of powder, have greater penetration than No. 7, I think he has missed the point of my remarks, which was, if 1oz. of No. 7 with a proper charge of powder (as I myself and many others have proved in the field) has sufficient destructive force to kill *clean* grouse, pheasants, duck,

partridges (in December), or pigeons, at any ordinary sporting distance, *i.e.*, up to 45yds., there is no advantage in using a shot which, although it may hit harder, can, after all, do no more than kill the object fired at, and has not such a "large" or "even" killing circle. With regard to the above contention, I have heard from one of the "reserve cuvée" of shots, and he says, "I hear that the best man at high pheasants in Wales always uses No. 8 shot." "Argus Olive" advocates the rule that "shot should increase in size with the increase in size of the game to be killed." I rather fancy that if he went out provided with a different sized shot for each bird or beast he might meet in an ordinary day's shooting, *i.e.*, pheasants, partridges, hares, rabbits, snipe, or duck, he or his loader would be apt to get rather mixed as to which barrel to fire, or which particular bin of shot to load with. My suggestion is simply to recommend No. 7 as the best all-round size to use, with the exception of big rabbit days, grouse very late in the season, and a big day at ducks, when No. 3 would be preferable.—CORNISH CHOUGH.

THE ABBOTSBURY SWANS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The swans at Abbotsbury, on Lord Ilchester's property on the South Coast, have figured in COUNTRY LIFE before, but the place has an interest that is rather unique, and the accompanying pictures are new and very

illustrative; so perhaps the reappearance of the birds may not be unwelcome. The swannery is well worth a visit by anyone who happens to be in the neighbourhood, and the keeper is a courteous, well-informed, and interesting guide. He knows the dispositions of the individual swans, or, at all events, of those whose nests are in the most accessible places; and this is rather useful information to the visitor, for the old male swan, in righteous wrath at intrusions on the privacy of his domestic life, is a severe champion,

even if the assertion that a blow of a swan's wing will break a man's leg is a little bit exaggerated. There are paths through the swannery, paths fringed with bamboos and other products of Flora that attest the mildness of the climate, and beside the paths, after one has penetrated through this garden-like part of the demesne to the wilder, swamplier part where the swans are nesting, the birds are sitting among the reeds on the great heaped-up nests, and hiss and flap their wings menacingly. The little ones are delightful grey balls of fluff, absurdly small beside their parents. The appearance of the multitudes of sitting swans is like that of islands of white rising from a sea of reeds, amongst which the real sea, or the estuarine waters, comes lapping up. It is a scene unlike any other, and stays in the memory for a long while after a visit.—A. X.

KANGAROOS FOR THE TABLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I notice in your article on "Kangaroos and Wallabies" that you are not aware of their having been tried for the dinner-table. I have had wallaby soup and found it excellent, not unlike veal broth.—G. W. DUFF ASSHETON SMITH.

